



THE TIMES

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Prince Philip snipes at Bill to ban handguns after Dunblane



Prince Philip: Bill unfair

By JILL SHIERMAN, ANDREW PIERCE AND BILL PROST

THE Duke of Edinburgh yesterday suggested that members of shooting clubs were no more dangerous than members of golf or squash clubs. Prince Philip took the unusual step of commenting on government policy by implying that the new legislation to ban certain handguns would be ineffective because it would not prevent weapons getting into the hands of criminals.

In an interview with BBC Radio Five Live's *Inside Edge*, he said: "I sympathise desperately with the

people who are bereaved at Dunblane, but I'm not altogether convinced that it's the best system to somehow shift the blame on to a very large and peaceable part of the community."

He added: "I mean... if a cricketer, for instance, suddenly decided to go into a school and batter a lot of people to death with a cricket bat which he could do very easily, I mean are you going to ban cricket bats? There's no evidence that people who use weapons for sport are any more dangerous than people who use golf clubs or tennis rackets or cricket bats." He called

for MPs and campaigners to pause and think before the legislation became law.

His comments were warmly welcomed by the shooting lobby but deplored by anti-gun campaigners, who said they were "sickened" by his views on gun sports.

Ann Pearson, one of the Dunblane Snowdrop petition organisers, said: "To think of the Queen coming up here and laying a wreath at our school and then hearing her husband say something like this sickens me - it is the Royal Family giving with one hand and taking away from the other."

The Firearms (Amendment) Bill is going through the House of Lords, where it has been opposed by more than 40 peers. Although it achieved its Second Reading this week, peers are threatening to rebel during the committee stage of the Bill, which bans all handguns over 0.22 calibre.

The Earl of Shrewsbury, the Government's chief adviser on gun laws, has also criticised the proposed legislation, accusing politicians on all sides of "a disastrous kneejerk reaction".

Prince Philip said in his pre-recorded interview, to be broadcast tonight, that it was important to make a difference between what "the weapons can do and what the people can do". He added: "There are always going to be unstable people who are going to do monstrous things. We know that. But I don't think it helps by taking it out on the rest of the population."

He believed transferring the blame for the killing of 16 children and their teacher last March on to "sport shooters" was "a little unreasonable". He understood those calling for a total handgun ban but argued that the main problem was that the legislation would not work as it had to be enforceable. Existing

regulations on owning guns should be tightened instead, he said.

The shooting lobby was delighted by the Prince's intervention. Michael Yardley, for the Sportsman's Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, said: "Clearly there has been a scapegoating of the shooting community since the Dunblane tragedy, probably because Thomas Hamilton is dead and not available to face the music."

It is estimated that in the past 30 years the Prince has shot a tiger, two crocodiles, 60 wild boar, stags, rabbits, ducks and at least 30,000 pheasant.

Embassy siege rebels threaten to kill hostages

By DAVID ADAMS, LATIN AMERICA CORRESPONDENT, AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

GUERRILLAS who took nearly 500 diplomats, politicians, business leaders and other officials hostage at a glittering embassy reception in Lima threatened last night to start shooting their captives one by one.

The leftist rebels got in to the Japanese Ambassador's residence disguised as waiters carrying champagne and hors d'oeuvres on Tuesday night, and promptly let off explosives and starting firing automatic weapons. One of the 23 rebels was wounded in a hour-long gunfight with police, and 170 women and elderly hostages were eventually released.

Yesterday, 21 hours after the siege began, the invaders demanded face-to-face talks with Peru's President Fujimori and said that unless they got their way, they would start shooting the hostages, with the Foreign Minister Francisco Tudela the first victim.

As the Peruvian Cabinet held an emergency session to

discuss the crisis, smoke could be seen above the 15th walls around the residence, which was surrounded by police and troops. At the same time, marksmen patrolled the roofs of neighbouring buildings.

The guerrillas, who claim to be from the far left Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, are demanding the release of a number of jailed comrades, a review of prison



Church: British envoy

conditions and curbs on the Japanese influence on the Government's economic policy. President Fujimori is of Japanese origin.

"What we are asking is the liberation of all of our comrades, who are being mistreated and tortured in the dungeons of the various prisons," a spokesman said. "We are clear: the liberation of all our prisoners, or we die with all the hostages."

Besides Señor Tudela, the hostages include Peru's Agriculture Minister, the Speaker, six members of Parliament and the president of the Supreme Court, as well as some 18 foreign ambassadors and scores of other diplomats - including Britain's Roger Church. The heads of more than a dozen Japanese firms are among the business leaders being held, along with military officers, teachers and representatives of about 20 Japanese associations who had gone to the residence to



A plain-clothed police officer waves a pistol as some of the hostages are freed from the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima yesterday

celebrate Emperor Akihito's birthday. The President's wife and mother and sister were among those released.

Yesterday morning a representative from the International Red Cross would help mediator the compound to act as mediator and four more hostages were freed. The Japanese Ambassador, Morihisa Aoki, said that apart from one rebel, no one

had been injured and that everyone was safe. Sally Bowen, a British freelance journalist who was among the first group of hostages to be freed, last night described how she had been eating and drinking in a marquee on the lawn with other women "dressed up to the nines" when the guerrillas struck. She said she heard a

huge explosion, followed 90 seconds later by automatic gunfire. That indicated that something really serious was happening. It was fairly intense gunfire. There was machinegun fire then heavier fire, which sounded like artillery.

Within moments, guerrillas wearing red and white scarves appeared and, using loudhailers, told the guests to lie face down on the floor. "They threatened that if we lifted our heads we would be shot," Ms Bowen said.

The guests, who were "fairly quiet" and in a state of "controlled panic", remained on the floor for about 40 minutes until the gunfire died down and then they were divided up and hustled into

Testing resolve, page 13
Matthew Parris, page 16

Muslim protest at carol concert

Parents have called for a public apology after an Asian teacher interrupted a school carol concert and berated Muslim pupils for talking part.

The 120-strong choir, which includes 40 Muslims, had just launched into *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* when the maths teacher allegedly began shouting: "Who is your God?" Page 3

Clarke set to win euro assurance

Kenneth Clarke will ask for and almost certainly receive final Cabinet agreement that the Government's wait-and-see policy on the single currency cannot be changed before the election. He rushed forward a Treasury paper for today's meeting. Page 2

Paedophile lists for police

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

PAEDOPHILES and other sex offenders will have to register their addresses with the police under sweeping plans announced yesterday. Ministers are also considering an American system in which communities are informed when paedophiles move into the district. David Maclean, a Home Office Minister, confirmed that discussions over such a scheme is being held with senior police officers.

But he warned of the danger of vigilante action in which enraged members of the public took action against convicted sex offenders. "There is the danger of people getting it wrong," he said. "But against

that we have to get the balance right. It is actually help protect the public," added Mr Maclean, who was speaking on Radio 4's *Today* programme only hours before the Government unveiled a Bill to set up a nationwide register of sex offenders. The Bill will force offenders to give their addresses to police, who will put it on the police national computer, every time they move.

The Bill also includes a measure to allow British tourists, who commit offences abroad particularly in Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Philippines, to be prosecuted in this country.

But the Government is to consult further on a plan to make it a criminal offence for a convicted sex offender to seek employment in jobs giving them access to children. Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, said that the Sex Offenders Bill published yesterday would help protect the public. "This Bill would provide the police with the information they need to apprehend sex offenders, and help them to protect the public from those who would seek to do harm to children. It is the latest in a series of Government measures targeting sex offenders including mandatory life sentences for second time serious sex. Continued on page 2, col 2

Total of jobless is lowest in six years

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

FOR the first time in almost six years, the number of people out of work has dropped below two million, boosting the Government's hopes of further growth in the economy before a general election next year.

A fall of 95,800 last month took the seasonally adjusted total to 1,929,400. The fall, the biggest since current records began, was hailed by John Major as "a great Christmas present for Britain". The Prime Minister claimed that the economy was now "the lion that roars in Europe". Michael Heseltine, the Dep-

uty Prime Minister, asked if an early election was now more likely, said: "The figures are getting better and better. Why not wait?" Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, said: "My confident expectation is that the economy is going to continue to strengthen. The spring is going to be a very attractive one."

Westminster took these remarks as a clear indication that the Government will delay the election for as long as possible.

Largest fall, page 21
Leading article, page 17

How truant Blair took off on a charter flight of fancy

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE best kept secret of Tony Blair's school days was revealed last night when he confessed that he sneaked on to a plane destined for the Bahamas at the age of 14 to escape the horrors of public school.

Mr Blair said "the craziest thing" he had ever done happened after his parents put him on a train in Newcastle to return to Retes College in Edinburgh.

"My parents saw me off on the train. I went down the carriage and got off the other end, went into the gents, changed into my casual clothes and went outside the station," the Labour leader said.

He then made his way to Newcastle Airport, evaded all security, and joined charter passengers on a flight to the Bahamas.

"I snuck on to the plane, and we were literally about to take off when the stewardess came up to me and said: 'I don't think I actually saw your boarding pass,'" he told Des O'Connor on his *Tonight* programme on ITV.

However, Mr Blair's dramatic disclosure astonished his friends and family, not least his father, who drove him back to the school on the day he played truant.

"The Bahamas? Who said that? Tony? Never. It's news to me," said Leo Blair, 73.

"He only got as far as the airport. He never got on the plane. It was not possible. He never had a passport. But I'm not supposed to say anything. I have been told to shut up by Tony's office. But it's nothing like that at all."

Leo Blair was not the only person baffled by the story. A spokeswoman for Newcastle Airport said: "In our 61-year history we have never had any flights to the Bahamas from here."

Mr Blair senior thought his son was confused. He said: "He was unhappy at Retes. It was nothing to do with the discipline. He was slipped three times at prep school in Durham and never complained. He could not face going back after being at home. The first we knew he had slipped off the train was when the headmaster telephoned to say he was at the airport."

Alistair Campbell, an Edinburgh solicitor who was a classmate of Mr Blair's, was also bemused. "It's news to me. Nobody said a word at the time or ever since."



"We've been inundated with one-way tickets to the Bahamas"

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What is this innocent gentleman doing in a squabbling Commons?

Facing the Celtic music at Scottish Questions in the Commons yesterday was the ever-diffident, super-courteous junior minister, Lord James Douglas-Hamilton. Undoubtedly the politest politician at Westminster, Lord James is an Oxford (lightweight) boxing Blue.

His father, the 14th Duke of Hamilton, was the first man to fly over Everest, and the target of the Hess mission. In 1993 Lord James wrote a book about the episode, *The Truth About Rudolf Hess*.

Few are quite sure what a

Lord is doing in the Commons in the first place. Some suppose it a mystery of the arcane rules of Scottish aristocracy, or has Douglas-Hamilton, looking for the Upper Chamber, wandered into the Commons by mistake and been too embarrassed to make his excuses and leave?

All enjoy the story about his first week as a minister, during which he had to be restrained from opening the chauffeur's car door for him. But a new Douglas-Hamilton story has just reached me — from a usually impeccable

source. Apparently Lord James was assigned the task of representing the Scottish Office at a symposium on the spread of AIDS.

Conscientiously, he asked for a briefing and his staff provided extensive background reading material.

Lord James read carefully, until reaching a passage which appeared to trouble him.

With many apologies he called a private secretary to his side. "Er, what does this word mean?" he said, pointing. "Which word?" the secretary



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

replied, for the minister seemed to be pointing at the word "heterosexual". "That one," he stammered: "het-het-heterosexual".

The embarrassed functionary explained as best he could to Lord James, who is married with four sons.

If this story is true, he will be the modern counterpart of Molière's Bourgeois Gentle-

man, who asked his newly-appointed tutor what the word "prose" meant, and, on being informed, danced around in delight at the discovery that he should have been speaking prose all his life — but only now become aware of his capacity to do so.

Lord James had been a heterosexual for nearly half a century, without knowing it.

Happily for the minister, Labour MPs seemed yesterday to have forgotten the Hamilton family's distinguished background in aviation, or he would have been the butt of their jokes about the special RAF flight which (apparently) brought Scottish minister George Kynoch back for Monday's controversial vote on European fisheries.

In a question about the cost of the old Skye ferry, Labour spokesman Helen Liddell asked how many ferry passages could have been paid for from the cost of one RAF flight

to London, Mr Kynoch, trying not to squirm, accused her of "demeaning herself".

George Kynoch, an increasingly confident minister with a clipped Scots accent, looks and speaks like a floor manager in an upmarket gentleman's tailors, the kind Lord James would patronise.

Their boss, the Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth, remarked that he would gladly have "strapped the hon Member for Cunningham N" (Labour's Brian Wilson) "to one wing".

As you see, a mood of merry

good-will gripped MPs as they departed for Christmas. Contributing to it, Madam Speaker snapped, and told Labour's Michael Connarty (Falkirk E) to "cease 'prattling from a secondary position'".

It has taken her a long time to notice.

Only the Tories' Lady Olga Maitland (another mysterious Ladyship) sounded optimistic, speaking of the "social chapter".

Lady Olga's accent suggested this chapter might be found in *Harper's & Queen*. She would be in it.

Clarke to call for Cabinet backing over EMU policy

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

KENNETH CLARKE will seek — and almost certainly receive — final Cabinet agreement today that the Government's wait-and-see policy on the single currency cannot be changed before the general election.

But a group of senior ministers led by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, is expected to argue that the Government should, while leaving options open, declare before the election that the chances of Britain joining the single currency during the next Parliament are highly unlikely.

The surprise new Cabinet discussion on the single currency follows Mr Clarke's decision to rush forward a Treasury paper for today's meeting which apparently kills the hopes of the Euro-sceptics that evidence of funding the entry criteria by several countries is now so clear that the Government could rule out membership and fight the election on saving the pound.

The paper was called for by Mr Howard two weeks ago in the expectation that it would be produced in the new year. But Mr Clarke has moved swiftly, according to senior government sources, the paper, which suggests that no judgment can be made on funding until the early months of 1998, "blows a hole" in Mr Howard's case.

However, the Home Secretary, will be strongly backed in his demand for John Major and Mr Clarke to issue a sceptical declaration on monetary union by Gillian

Shepherd, the Education Secretary, William Hague, the Welsh Secretary, and Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary.

Sources said that the case for a declaration from the Government was strengthening and had not been compromised by the paper.

Mr Clarke's confidence was demonstrated yesterday when he rejected demands for Britain to renegotiate the terms of its European Union membership or rule out participation in a single currency. He issued what was perhaps his strongest defence of the EU and Britain's part in it.

Without going as far as enraging the sceptics by backing participation in a single currency, he said Britain's economic success depended on remaining a "key player in the politics of our continent".

He condemned the "mythology" that Britain in 1973 had joined only an economic community with no political dimension. It had joined to increase its influence in the world and the decision had also involved the explicit pooling of some legal sovereignty in limited and specific areas set down in the Treaty of Rome. This was a "conscious political decision" and its implications were discussed extensively in Parliament.

Mr Clarke's address to the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House underlined his reputation as the Cabinet's most enthusiastic pro-European. But there was some comfort for the Euro-sceptics in his argument that the "relentless pursuit of a centralised vision" was looking more and more out of date.

Mr Clarke took a sideswipe at those who suggested that Britain could continue to attract significant inward investment outside the EU. "People do not invest in Britain, they do not acquire our companies, they do not create jobs in this country because they like our golf courses or to practise their English. They do it because they see Britain as a high-skill, low-tax, flexible, business-friendly entry point into the big, rich consumer market place which is Europe today."

"As a country, we cannot choose to live by the European market place, economically and then exclude ourselves from discussion of the political future of our continent. That is the path of those who would seek British withdrawal from the EU or a fundamental re-negotiation of our membership terms. It is one which we rightly reject."



Clarke says Britain's influence is at stake

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Norma and John Major touring Rush Primary School in Dungannon during their Christmas visit to Northern Ireland yesterday. The Prime Minister conceded that the peace process had taken a backward step over the year but, although he was "no starry-eyed optimist", he believed there were grounds for hope for the future

Tories 'lied as well as cheated'

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

RELATIONS between the two main political parties deteriorated further yesterday as Labour accused the Tories of lying as well as cheating in their handling of key parliamentary votes.

Tory MPs left Westminster for the Christmas break facing the prospect of bitter skirmishes in Parliament in the new year after Labour confirmed that it would not co-operate with "pairing" arrangements to ease business through the Commons. Normally, a Tory MP and an opposition MP agree to absent themselves from Commons divisions with their whips' permission and cancel out each other's votes.

Labour's pledge to withdraw from the convention means that Tory MPs will have to endure long hours in the Commons ready to vote in case Labour attempts to defeat the Government. Ministers will also be forced to rush back

from meetings abroad to attend votes on routine legislation.

Donald Dewar, Labour's Chief Whip, repeated his accusation that the Tories cheated in Monday's vote on fishing by "double pairing" and securing an extra three votes. Senior Tory sources last night admitted that the party had been pairing one Tory MP with two MPs from different opposition parties in key votes for more than a year. "It was a good game while it lasted," one senior source said.

The dispute escalated when Mr Dewar also accused the Tories of lying after they claimed that Labour had itself broken "pairing" rules to help to defeat the Government in a vote on the anti-stalking Bill on Tuesday night.

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory Party chairman, said that 14 Labour MPs had broken their own pairing arrangements to vote for a minor amendment to the

Protection Against Harassment Bill which gave the courts powers to force convicted stalkers to undergo counselling.

In a letter to Alastair Goodlad, the Tory Chief Whip, Mr Dewar said that only one Labour MP, John Mason (Glasgow Cathcart), had broken his pairing agreement and that it had been an honest mistake. He said the 13 other MPs who had voted had no pairing agreement.

Several Tory MPs admitted that they had failed to vote because they mistakenly thought they had been paired. Many others had thought the vote would take place later in the evening.

Sir Archibald Hamilton, a former Tory whip, said he had reservations about what had happened at Monday's vote. "I think it was something that the Government might now regret, particularly in terms that we would have won that vote anyway," he told BBC Radio 4's Today.

American police tell neighbourhood if molester moves in

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

BRITISH ministers said yesterday that their plan requiring sex offenders to register their addresses with police may be extended by copying American practice. In many parts of the United States, the police then notify schools, child groups and even, according to the seriousness of the offence, all neighbours within a quarter of a mile of a child sex offender's home and workplace.

The stringent requirements, which have greatly hampered persistent sex offenders, are the result of "Megan's Law". The legislation was named after Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old New Jersey child who in 1994 was raped and strangled by a convicted sex offender who lived opposite her home. Her death created outrage across the US. People

wanted to know why Megan's parents were not told they were living near such a man.

The requirements of Megan's Law, which has been adopted by 40 states, vary from state to state, but the aim is the same. It is not without flaws. Lieutenant Roger Kane, head of the sex crimes unit for the police department in Bergen County, New Jersey, said yesterday that Megan's Law has created a heavy workload for his staff of ten. Convicted offenders have to reregister every year at least, and the task of keeping residents apprised is a monumental task.

"However," said Lieutenant Kane, "if it saves even just one child's life, it is worth the effort."

It has also led to instances of vigilante groups trying to run sex offenders out of towns. "This is something we have to watch out for," Lieutenant Kane said. Defenders of Megan's Law argue that despite the occasional outburst of medieval-style flogging in the streets, the law delivers what the majority of people want: protection from child abusers. On release from prison, any "compulsive, repetitive sex offender" must register with the local police station. There are three grades of alert, determined by local prosecutors. Grade 1, which applies to the least serious sex offences, such as "flashing", means that all police stations are advised of the offender's presence.

Under grade 2, for more serious criminals, all schools and children's groups, such as scout troops, are notified that an offender has moved into the area. Grade 3 is for the most serious types of sex offenders, such as rapists and killers. Police visit every house and flat within a quarter of a mile in all directions from an offender's new residence, and sometimes also his workplace.

In country areas, the "net" area will be increased to perhaps half a mile or more. If residents are not at home, police will make return calls until they are confident that everyone has been told.

Offenders complain that they have served their time in prison and that the law prevents them getting on with their lives, but the response from parents and teachers is broadly favourable. "The law is so popular it is almost scary," said Lieutenant Kane.

Lists of offenders are kept on file at police precincts and are available for inspection. The law is having an impact on property values. The presence of a sex offender can drive down house prices in a neighbourhood, and estate agents have introduced contractual requirements which demand that tenants must declare if they have been told of any molesters living in the area.

Continued from page 1

offenders and longer supervision on their release from prison.

The Bill won support from Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, and children's charities, but probation officers warned that the register was not a solution to child sex abuse.

Under the Bill, which the Government hopes will be passed by parliament before the General Election, convicted child sex offenders and

people guilty of rape would be required to register their names and addresses with the police and notify them when they move. Other offences covered by the Bill are intercourse with a girl under 13, intercourse with a girl aged between 13-16, incest by a man, buggery, indecency between men, indecent assault on a woman, indecent assault on a man and causing prostitution with a girl under 16. The registering requirement will be for a

minimum of five years for an offender given a non-custodial sentence, but will be life for anyone given a jail term of 30 months or more. A person jailed for between six and 30 months will be on the register for 10 years, and seven years for an offender jailed for less than six months.

The registration period will be halved for anyone convicted of an offence while under the age of 18. Offenders who have been cautioned for any of the listed sexual offences will also have to go on the register.

Under the Bill offenders must register with their local police within 14 days of moving into a district and failure will be a criminal offence punishable by a maximum fine of £1,000 and/or up to a month in jail.

Offenders will be unable to appeal against being on the register, unless they win an appeal against their conviction.

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Labour plan for human rights

Labour unveiled plans yesterday to make the European Convention on Human Rights part of British law so that people would not have to take the costly trek to Strasbourg to enforce their rights.

The Shadow Home Secretary, Jack Straw, said that British citizens, almost alone in Europe, could not enforce their rights in their own courts. Mr Straw told a conference at Westminster: "We want to bring our rights home. For almost 50 years we have had rights under the Convention but these are not protected by British courts."

Veal crates to go

More humane treatment of veal calves will be enforced throughout the European Union under an agreement reached in Brussels this week. Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister said. The narrow crates in which calves are widely reared on the Continent will be phased out and an improved diet introduced.

Harding's £190m

Matthew Harding, vice-chairman of Chelsea Football Club, left more than £190 million net. He instructed in his will that his estate should be split between his wife, Ruth, and her children, his girlfriend, Vicky Jaramilla, and her child and the shareholders of his insurance company Benfield Group.

Escape foiled

Prisoners who tried to chase their way out of Perth jail by digging a hole in their cell wall with razor blades attached to toothbrushes were foiled when prison staff pulled down a poster covering the hole. Two men serving life had managed to dig 1½ ft into the 5 ft thick outer wall before they were discovered.

Mutant maize

Genetically modified American maize is to be sold throughout the European Union despite protests from environmental and consumer groups. The European Commission gave the go-ahead yesterday after studies by scientific committees concluded that there was no threat to animal or human health.

Hunt nears end

The father of a woman murdered eight years ago in Kenya may have to give up his hunt for the killer. John Ward is in Nairobi for talks with police. He expects the investigations to be completed in about four months, and said that if no new leads arose he would end his search for the murderer of Julie, 28.

Budget problem. Finance solution.



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Acid killer gets life after boasting of the perfect murder

By MICHAEL HORNELL

A CONVICTED fraudster who claimed to have committed the perfect murder when he dissolved his wife's body in acid was jailed for life yesterday. Russell Causley had boasted that his achievement was "better than an Agatha Christie murder".

Veronica Packman, known as Carol, disappeared in 1985 at the age of 40 after her husband decided to move his young mistress into the family home in Bournemouth and to take her name. Winchester Crown Court was told that Causley, 53, said his wife had run off with another man and lied to friends about her whereabouts. He had had his lover, Patricia Causley, forge her signature to make it look as though she were still alive.

He was given away by conversations with other prisoners after he was jailed last year for an £800,000 insurance fraud in which he faked his own drowning at sea. The jury found Causley guilty of murder after three hours' deliberation. Police said later that they would continue their investigations in an attempt to locate Mrs Packman's remains.

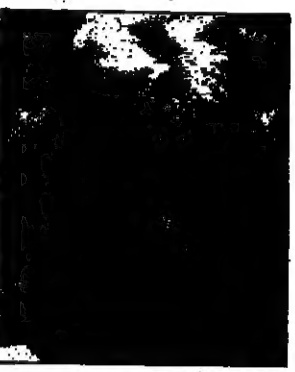
The couple's daughter, Samantha, 28, who is married with a son aged seven, gave evidence against Causley. She said: "His life is over now. I feel justice has finally been done but it's been an absolute nightmare reliving it after all these years. Words cannot describe how I feel about my father — hate is not enough. For years I had prayed Mum was still alive but there were just too many things that didn't add up."

She added: "Now the question I would like answered is what did he do with her body. Finding her has always been the priority. Now I want the chance to give her a decent burial and to pay my last respects after all these years."

It was while in Brixton prison that Causley confessed to murder to a fellow inmate and asked whether it was possible to be convicted of murder in the absence of a body. He was transferred to



Russell Causley: faked his own death for cash



Veronica Packman: her remains were not found

Ford open prison where he met Andrew Murphy, another inmate, and said: "She is a missing person and she's going to stay that way. I killed her before she was reported missing and covered my tracks well."

He said his favourite day was June 21 when "I got rid of that bitch. I did it better than an Agatha Christie murder. I put her away peacefully with a shot of gas and put a plastic bag over her head. I used acid to get rid of the body. It will never be found."

Causley met Mrs Packman in Reading and they married in September 1965. They moved to Dorset, where Samantha was born in 1968. They travelled the world on business contracts before moving back to Britain in 1982.

Causley then met Patricia Causley, then 25, and employed her after he opened an insurance business in Bourne-mouth in 1984. A few months

later she sold her flat and moved into the family home at his invitation.

Mrs Packman disappeared in June 1985 while her husband and teenage daughter were on a day-trip to London. Her wedding ring was found on a note, purportedly by her in the kitchen. It said she could take no more. Upstairs, her favourite ballgown was discovered slashed to pieces.

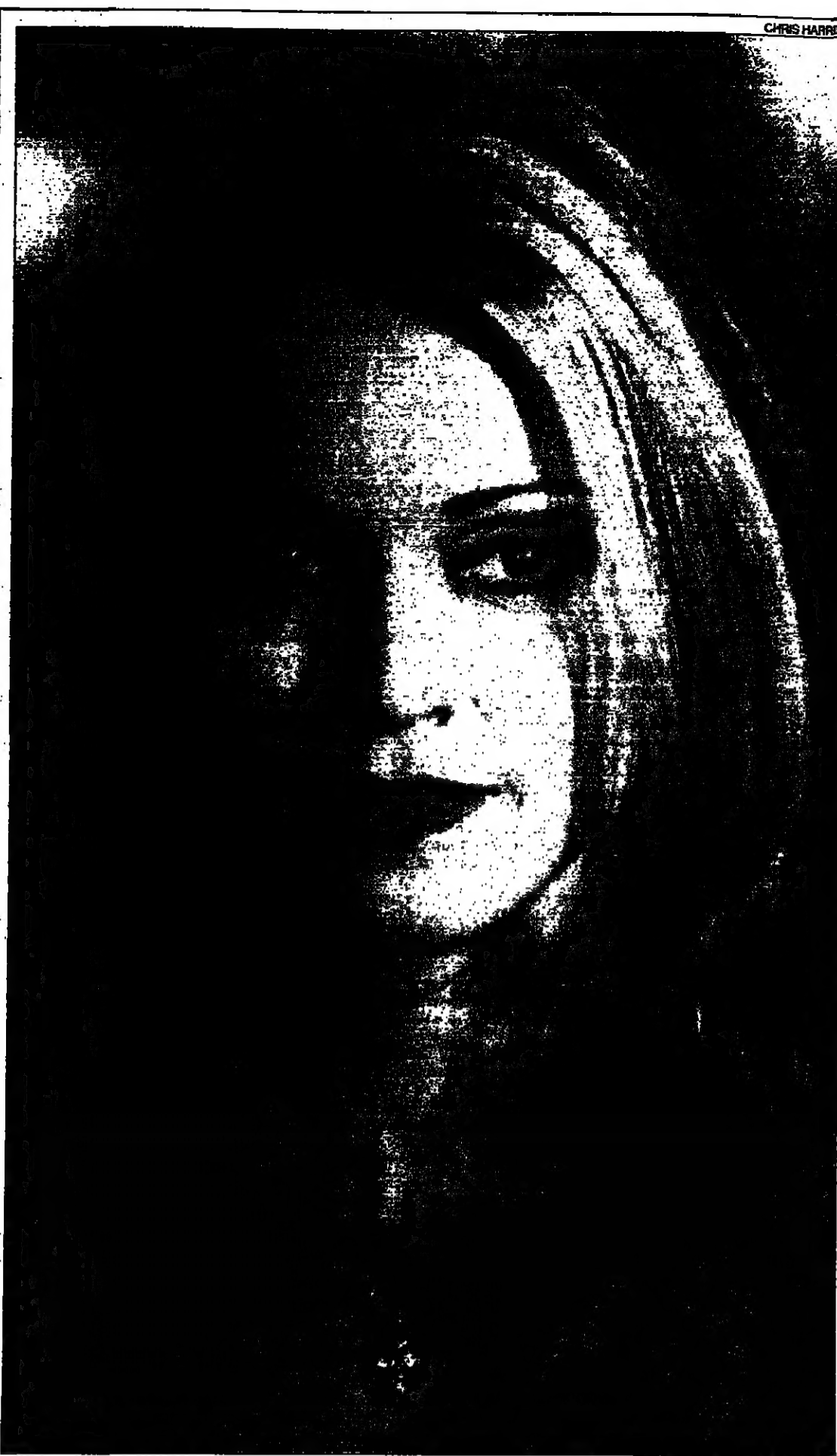
Few of her personal effects were missing. However, and she had left her Rolex watch and jewellery, together with her extensive wardrobe and all the family suitcases. Causley reported his wife missing to police and attempts were made to find her.

Detective Chief Inspector Tony Nott, who led the murder inquiry, said her bank account had not been touched, she had not filed for divorce or a financial share of the marriage from the husband who treated her so badly, and had made no attempt to contact her daughter.

When in 1993 a detective from Guernsey told Dorset police that he was investigating Causley's own "disappearance" in the insurance swindle, detectives began to examine the case further.

They found that the family home had been sold with Mrs Packman's forged signature; she had not registered with a doctor or received dental care; there were no tax and insurance records since 1985; the passport of the well-travelled career woman had not been renewed since its expiry in 1992; and Patricia Causley had worked in Canada using the missing woman's name. Causley told friends she had taken £2,000 and gone abroad with a "rich German in a red Porsche".

Causley was jailed for two years for the insurance swindle. He served 12 months and was re-arrested on his release. Patricia Causley, 37, was given a 12-month suspended sentence. She had claimed Causley had disappeared overboard from a yacht chartered to sail to Guernsey. Causley was caught out because he could not resist visiting her.



Madonna yesterday: she had pleaded for the role of Evita, created by the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and directed in the film by Alan Parker, right

Cry for me if I don't win an Oscar ...

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

MADONNA said yesterday that she expected to be nominated for an Oscar for her performance in *Evita*. She said that she had written an impassioned letter to the film's director, Alan Parker, setting out why she thought herself ideal for the role of Eva Perón, and told how it had taken 20 meetings with him before he became convinced.

Madonna said at the launch of the musical film in London that she identified with Perón "on many levels", drawing parallels between herself and the former dictator's wife who rose from poverty to become one of the most powerful women in the world. "She came from a small town, from nothing essentially, and moved to the big city and had the courage to make something incredible with her life ... people were either incredibly for her or against her."

The actress and singer, wearing a low-cut 1940s-style dress and platform sandals, said that, until the last moment, "I still wasn't sure I had the movie." Parker said: "I frustrated her, because I kept saying, 'Oh, I don't know ...'"

Madonna, who co-stars with the British actor Jonathan Pryce as Juan Perón, had pleaded in her letter to Parker that the film would be a "chance for me as a singer and actress to do things I'd never done before". She studied for three months with a vocal coach in New York "to learn how to sing all over again". Asked at the press conference whether she thought she would be selected for an Oscar and whether that was important to her, she replied: "Yes and yes."

Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer, was asked about his reported rift with Sir Tim Rice, the lyricist, who did not attend the premiere in Los Angeles and is expected to be absent from the premiere in London tomorrow. Sir Andrew said: "I don't know where he is today. I haven't been that involved in the film. I just feel it's important to be here to show my endorsement of all the incredible hard work that has gone on, and I am sorry he's not."

Review, page 29



150 cars fail to stop for roadside rape victim

By ADAM FRESCO

A CIVIL servant was beaten to the ground beside a busy road at rush hour before being dragged into bushes and raped, police said yesterday.

Police believe that at least 150 motorists saw the 36-year-old woman being repeatedly punched as they stopped at a mini-roundabout, but they failed to help her. She has told police that she remembers looking up at people in their cars and seeing them look at her but doing nothing to help her.

The woman was walking to her home in Chislehurst, Kent, after getting off the 6.08pm train from Charing Cross. She was attacked at about 7pm. To stop her screaming the attacker pushed a metal bar into her mouth.

When the attack was over the woman walked into the road and flagged down a car. Police want to trace the woman who finally stopped for the victim. She gave her name as Maureen and took the victim to Chislehurst police station.

The man is described as white, aged between 28 and 33, with short, curly ginger or light brown hair. He was about 5ft 7in, slightly built, with a long, thin, clean-shaven face. He had thin lips and wore dark clothing. Police believe that he would have looked muddy and dishevelled after the attack.

Muslim teacher breaks up school carol concert

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A SCHOOL carol performance broke up in chaos as the choir sang *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* when a teacher started berating Muslim pupils for taking part.

Pupils said Israr Khan, a maths teacher at Washwood Heath School, Birmingham, stood up and shouted "Who is your God?" at the choristers and the audience of pupils.

Some of those watching were then said to have started clapping and shouting "Allah". About a third of the choir of 120 were Asian pupils. The school said yesterday that it would investigate the incident, but many parents called for a public apology from the teacher.

Ozy Malik, an 18-year-old pupil, said: "The concert was going fine and then the teacher just stood up and shouted over the kids singing. He said 'Excuse me, there are Muslim boys and girls in this choir who are saying that Jesus is their God by taking part. This is totally wrong.'"

Mr Malik said that Mr Khan then shouted at the 12 and 13-year-old pupils watching. "Everybody started clapping and shouting Allah. All of the white girls just walked out as well as some of the Asian girls — they looked really upset. I disagree with what he said. Islam teaches you to respect all religions and we also see Jesus as a prophet."

One 17-year-old girl singer, who did not want to be named, said: "It was really awful. The audience was booing and shouting at us. I was in tears — and there were quite a number of others who were as well. We had put so much work into it and this has ruined it."

Derek Rouse, whose 15-year-old daughter, Cassie, was in the choir, said: "If it was a child who had come out and said something like this they would have been expelled. I'm now keeping Cassie away from school until we get a public apology from Mr Khan. If he felt so strongly about it he should have spoken to the headmaster and not in front of the kids."

His wife, Sally, added: "He had a nerve standing up and saying something like this. It shows an utter disregard for other religions and is hypocritical of him. Cassie doesn't want to go back to school until he has apologised."

The incident was at a preview for first and second-year pupils on Monday. The show for parents was expected to take place last night.

Mr Khan refused to comment about the incident. Jim Collins, the head teacher, said: "Following an interruption at a rehearsal at the school, an incident occurred involving a member of staff. This is now subject to an internal investigation at the school."

Fresh anguish for jailed mother

By TIM JONES AND PAUL WILKINSON

A YOUNG mother of three will know tomorrow whether she must spend Christmas in jail for attacking her husband's lover with her stiletto heels.

Lawyers will make an application to the Appeal Court for bail pending an appeal by Debbie Smith against a nine-month sentence for assault and affray, imposed last Friday at Minshull Crown Court in Manchester.

Yesterday Smith, 29, from Stalybridge, who has been held in the hospital wing of Risley remand centre near Warrington since her sentence, faced fresh distress when she learnt that two of her children had been taken by their estranged father.

Relatives had delayed for 24 hours telling her that her former husband Jeffrey, 31, had removed their sons Jeff, 9, and Jonathan, 7, from school. Her boys and their sister Emma, 11, were being looked after by their grandmother.

Smith's lawyers had expected a community-based sentence, but on Friday Mrs Smith, who had no previous convictions, was jailed by Judge Peter Lakin. Smith was taken from the dock screaming: "My babies, my babies."

She had admitted assaulting her former best friend, Francine French, after discovering her affair with her husband.

School bullies graduate to the board

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

SCHOOL bullies could grow up to become chairmen of major companies because both require qualities necessary for tough management, a psychologist said yesterday.

"The traditional picture of the bully as a stupid brute lacking social skills is a dangerous myth. In order to exert their power, bullies require insight into the way their victims' minds work and the capacity to manipulate social situations."

A study of 72 children aged seven to ten at three south London schools showed

that those identified as ring-leader bullies had a superior understanding of other people's thoughts but not their feelings. The children were given 11 stories and their capacity to read others' minds and emotions was assessed.

Jon Sutton, a researcher at Goldsmiths College, London, said: "It is this gap between their social and emotional understanding that makes ring leaders such cold and effective bullies."

The results, presented to the British Psychological Society's conference in London yesterday, suggest that bullies are not socially inept. Dr Sutton said: "In some areas they are superior. This kind

of skilled manipulator should do well. They could make good managers."

However, the ruthlessness necessary in successful management could also lead people into crime. Dr Sutton said that the bullies' inability to read other people's emotions was also seen in psychopaths, who are distinguished by their capacity for "cold cognition".

He said anti-bullying measures should include all those who hang around the ring leaders. Most children were against bullying, yet 85 per cent of incidents occur with other children present. Dr Sutton suggested the silent minority should be helped to break the cycle.

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Fayed pledges cash support for new anti-abortion party

By Russell Jenkins

MOHAMED AL FAYED has promised financial backing for a new anti-abortion party which hopes to field at least 50 candidates at the general election.

The Egyptian-born multi-millionaire believes that the Conservatives and Labour have been "mealy-mouthed" about abortion and that the subject should be at the centre of British political debate.

Mr Fayed, a father of four, believes strongly that children are a gift from God and that they should be nurtured and nourished, his spokesman said yesterday.

The decision to finance the Pro-Life Alliance Party is disclosed in today's edition of *New Statesman*. The alliance will have candidates in the constituencies of "pro-choice" MPs, including Virginia Bottomley, Sir Nicholas Lyell, Marjorie Mowlam and Clare Short. It hopes to field sufficient candidates to qualify for a party political broadcast, in which it would show a late-term abortion.

The alliance, formed by members of the Quintavalle family of Chelsea, London, and the anti-abortion group Life, aims to make abortion as unavoidable an issue for politicians as it was in the recent US presidential elections.

Mr Fayed's spokesman told *New Statesman*: "He does not just talk about family values, like some Conservative MPs. He is doing something towards these ends and reintroducing a sense of morality and purpose. Mr Fayed has under-

taken to provide substantial sums of money to help the party with their election expenses because he believes that what they are doing is in the long-term interests of everyone in this country."

The spokesman was anxious to dismiss any suggestion that Mr Fayed hoped to emulate Sir James Goldsmith, who set up the Referendum Party to campaign for a referendum on Britain's continued adherence to the Maastricht treaty. "These are not overtly political questions. He sees it in terms of a moral crusade," the spokesman said.

New Statesman said that the Harrods chairman had decided to underwrite the deposits of alliance party candidates to the tune of £25,000, but Mr Fayed's aides refused to confirm the figure.

Mr Fayed has made donations, said to total £180,000 over three years, to *Christian Democrat*, a small-circulation

newspaper which is the mouthpiece for the Movement for Christian Democracy. The non-denominational, cross-party group was launched in 1990 by David Alton, the Liberal Democrat MP. *The Times* reported in May that the Liberal Democrats had rejected Mr Fayed's offer of a substantial donation to help them to fight the next general election.

Bruno Quintavalle, 25, founder of the pro-life party, said that a number of people had offered financial backing. He told *New Statesman*: "We don't yet have a bank account open but we have money pledged. I cannot comment on individual donors. We would like to be totally open and would prefer that donors are prepared to be openly associated with the pro-life movement. We have not sought money from abroad."

Last month Mr Fayed won the latest round of his legal battle to become a British citizen. Judges in the appeal court ruled by a 2-1 majority that he and his younger brother, Ali, were treated unfairly when their citizenship applications were refused without reasons being given by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary.

Last August Mr Fayed visited Zoe's Place, a baby hospice at Alderhey Hospital, Merseyside. "He was very impressed by the work that was being done," his spokesman said. "He has provided the finance to increase the scope of their work."



Fayed believes that babies are gift from God



Doris Jourd, believed by her family to have been the world's first Girl Guide, raises a glass for her birthday

Pioneer of the Girl Guides turns 100

By Robin Young

A WOMAN believed by her family and friends to have been the world's first Girl Guide is 100 today. Doris Best joined her local Boy Scout troop in Kent and became founder member of a distinct troop of Girl Guides two years before the Girl Guides were officially launched.

As a young girl in the early years of the century she kept pestering her mother to let her join the Boy Scouts. Eventually Alice Best let her daughter tag along and she equipped herself with a brown shirt and hat to follow the boys along the street, carrying a broomstick.

In 1908, when she was 12, she was accepted as an affil-

iate member of the troop. Within a month 60 girls had joined her and in 1909 she formed the first Girl Scouts troop in Gillingham.

In 1910 Lady Baden-Powell officially launched the Girl Guides. Lord Baden-Powell presented Alice Best with the first Girl Scouts captain's certificate, and from then her Gillingham troop adhered to the Girl Guides.

Her daughter, now Mrs Jourd, went on to give more than 60 years' service to the Guides, serving as captain of the 1st Whitstable Guides, in Kent, for 30 years before retiring at 74, saying she did not want to stay on as "an old dodderer". She now lives in a nursing home in Whitstable, close to her three children and

six grandchildren, who have all been involved in the Guiding movement.

Her daughter Christine Stanley-Hughes, 63, said yesterday: "Guiding was one of the dearest things in her life. She was seen as rather a racy pioneer in her day."

The Guides Association said: "It is difficult to be sure who the first Girl Guide was. We tend to give the credit to Lady Baden-Powell, but a lot of girls were joining the Boy Scouts in 1906 and 1909."

"Many girls were present at the great Crystal Palace rally held by the Scouts in 1909, the year before the Guides were established. Mrs Jourd was certainly one of the first Girl Guides, and she might well have been the very first."



Doris Jourd in the Boy Scouts in 1908, aged 12

Callaghan tells Blair to retain union link

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

LORD Callaghan of Cardiff, the former Prime Minister, has issued a clear warning to Tony Blair not to break the Labour Party's links with the trade unions.

In an interview today Lord Callaghan also suggests that party members would defeat any attempt to try to end the relationship.

The Labour leadership has indicated that it is prepared to reduce significantly the traditional link between the trade unions and the party. One option being floated is to break the link altogether, possibly via a membership ballot, if the unions instigate a spate of strikes after the election of a Labour government.

In an interview with *New Statesman*, Lord Callaghan, 84, emphasises that the unions are part of Labour's heritage and should not be abandoned. "I would be opposed to breaking the relationship with the trade unions and the party. And I suspect most party members would agree," he says.

"It is part of our heritage and it is intrinsic in the party and the movement that we should keep the link. Anyone who doesn't believe that doesn't understand our history or the natural foundation of our party."

Lord Callaghan, who is the only living Labour Prime Minister, has sharp words for new members who are not abreast with the party's history: "I do hope new party members will read the history and learn from the background of the party before they come to any conclusions too quickly."

New guidelines on gagging orders cut ministers' powers

By Frances Gibb
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS' powers to withhold sensitive documents under "gagging orders" have been curtailed in guidelines announced by the Lord Chancellor and the Attorney-General yesterday.

The advice, drawn up after Sir Richard Scott's inquiry into the sale of arms to Iraq, says documents must be disclosed unless it would

cause "real damage or harm to the public interest". Ministers will have to spell out why they think disclosure would harm the public interest, but the courts will have the final say and will favour disclosure.

The Cabinet's two legal chiefs issued a joint statement to the House of Lords and Commons, saying: "The Government is committed to the principle that there should be the maximum disclosure consistent with protecting essential

public interests." The advice takes on board the main thrust of Sir Richard's proposals after the arms-to-Iraq inquiry and is also in line with the view of Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, that public interest immunity should be claimed only "for the bare minimum of documents for which the claim of serious harm can be seen to be clearly justified".

Ministers will no longer be able to claim "public interest immunity" or

a gagging order for whole classes of documents. Instead, ministers will "focus on the damage that disclosure will cause".

Sir Richard, now Vice-Chancellor of the Supreme Court, welcomed the advice and said it would lead to far fewer claims to withhold documents. "This is exactly what I wanted. There will be only claims based on the content of documents, and where disclosure could cause serious harm," Sir Nicholas Lyell,

the Attorney-General, said that it was impossible to describe "such damage exhaustively", adding: "It may relate to the safety of an individual, such as an informant, to a regulatory process; or it may be damage to international relations caused by the disclosure of confidential diplomatic communications."

But normally the harm would be in the form of "direct and immediate harm to, for example, the nation's economic interests or our relations

with a foreign state; in some cases it may be indirect or longer term damage, to which the disclosure of the material would contribute".

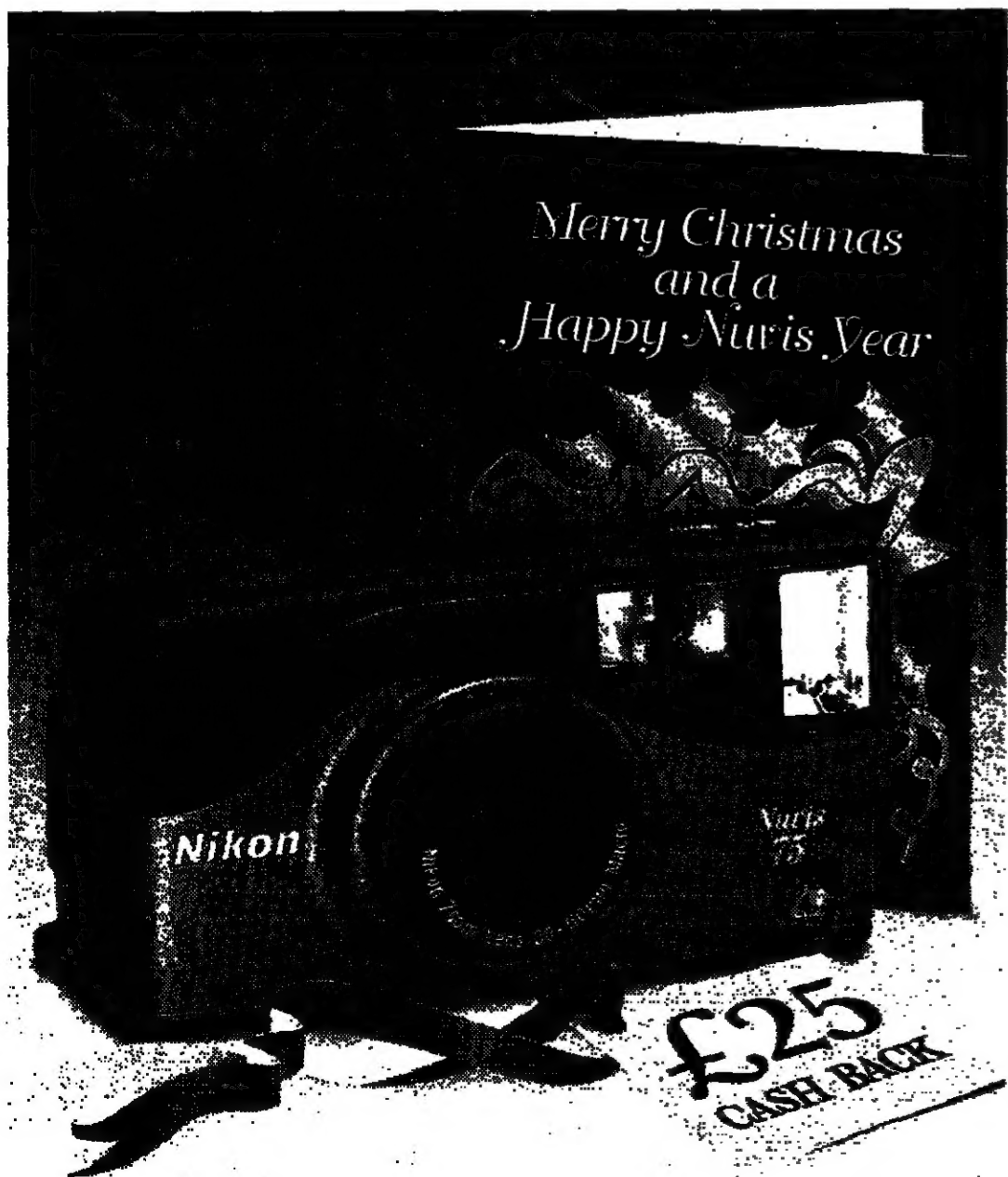
As far as possible, where ministers issued the certificates, they would have to identify why disclosure of the information would cause real damage and the certificates spell out "in greater detail than before both what the document is and what damage its disclosure would be likely to do".

CORRECTIONS

A report in early editions (December 13) stated that Ivor Roberts, the British Ambassador in Belgrade, figured in a cartoon in a local paper with President Milosevic of Serbia. He did not, and we apologise for the mistake.

A photograph which appeared yesterday, captioned as being of Estée Lauder, was not in fact of Ms Lauder. We apologise for the error.

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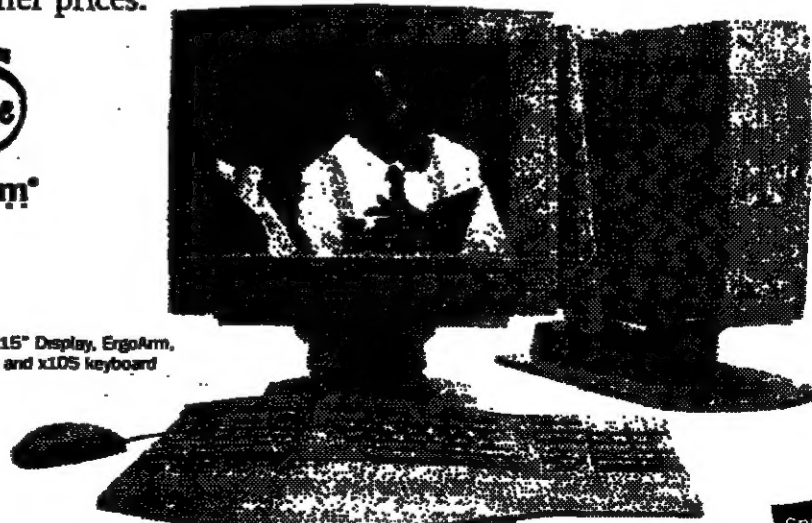
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'We don't argue the rights and wrongs of the law, but we must deal with its consequences'

Red Cross to feed London's starving asylum seekers

By IAN MURRAY, COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

THE Red Cross is to distribute food parcels in Britain for the first time in nearly 50 years. It says new government immigration controls have reduced refugees to the poverty levels of famine-stricken Third World countries.

The international organisation has added three refugee day centres in London to its long Christmas list. Half the Red Cross aid budget is spent in Africa, with Afghanistan, Georgia and Colombia among other big beneficiaries. "The main criterion for aid is hunger," a spokesman for the International Red Cross in Geneva said. "If someone is hungry then it is our mission to feed them."

From tomorrow until January 2,200 parcels a day will be delivered for distribution among asylum seekers who are regular visitors to centres in Vauxhall, Camden and Newham. Each package is meant to last for two days. The £10,000 cost will come from the discretionary fund of the British Red Cross, which its director-general, Mike Whitlam, can spend where he considers there is a need.

Mr Whitlam said: "We do not argue the rights and wrongs of the law, but as a hu-

manitarian organisation we have to deal with its consequences. We have focused on the most vulnerable group, who are very depressed and just do not know where their next meal is coming from. They would be in desperate straits without this help because at this time of year many of the places they can go to beg for help are closed."

In February the Government withdrew benefits from asylum seekers who did not make an application immediately on arrival. That was ruled illegal by the High Court in June and benefits were reinstated, only to be withdrawn again when the Asylum and Immigration Act was passed on July 24.

By September at least 10,000 people had lost their benefit entitlement and the Refugee Council began dealing with an increasing flow. The situation changed again in October, when the High Court ruled that local authorities had a duty under the 1948 National Assistance Act to provide shelter, warmth and food.

A government appeal against that decision will be heard on January 13-14. Until then local authorities are obliged to provide minimal help,

which they estimate is costing them about £2 million a week.

Most refugees are in London, where there are currently 1,900 single adults, 1,500 families and 550 children on their own. Mark Bangwyn, social policy officer of the Association of London Government, said: "Because they have no right to local authority accommodation we have to house them in expensive bed-and-breakfast places, where we have to pay prices which compete with those paid by tourists. In most cases these people wander the streets all day with no money. They are sometimes given lists of soup kitchens, but that is all."

Nick Hardwick, chief executive of the Refugee Council, said: "The number of people attending our day centres has doubled to 130 in two months and many walk miles for a meal with us. Many are professional people. It just cannot be the answer to make it impossible for people to eat."

Numbers of refugees seeking asylum in Britain have fallen from 4,700 a month a year ago to 1,900 now. Only 6 per cent of those applying are granted refugee status.

Leading article, page 17



From toothpaste to sardines: the contents of parcels to be distributed at three refugee day centres in London

Saved - by eggs and legs from home

By ALAN HAMILTON

PROBABLY the oddest Red Cross parcel dispatched from Britain was dropped from a Blenheim bomber over France on August 19, 1941. Addressed to Wing Commander D.R.S. Bader, the bulky package contained a replacement pair of artificial legs.

The flying ace had left one tin leg trapped in the cockpit of his damaged Spitfire and had bent the other as he baled out. His German captives, who regarded their adversary with the highest admiration, allowed the bomber safe passage to drop the replacement limbs,

allowing their prisoner some mobility in his new home at Colditz.

For thousands of ordinary prisoners of war, the Red Cross parcel was a lifeline to survival. By May 1945 more than 20 million parcels, packed at 17 centres throughout Britain, had been shipped by the British Red Cross and the Order of St John to neutral Lisbon for distribution to British and Commonwealth POWs.

The contents were intended to provide a vital dietary supplement to inadequate prison food. There would usually be a quarter pound of Marmite, a tin of Rowntree's cocoa, a tin of condensed milk and a bar of soap. Other regular

items were cans of Crosse and Blackwell's Scotch herrings, tinned meat roll, cheese, dried eggs, jam, margarine, vegetables, biscuits, a bar of chocolate and a tin of 50 cigarettes.

Even the home-dwelling British enjoyed the benefit of food parcels in the austerity of the immediate postwar years. Canadian families, moved by the severe rationing in the mother country, donated many thousands of food parcels in 1948.

In the previous year, when severe flooding affected 45,000 British homes and 130,000 people, the Red Cross distributed more than 26,000 cases of food and milk.

Insect flight tests reveal plane truth

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

INSECTS use the same aerodynamic effects as Concorde to stay aloft, zoologists at Cambridge have shown.

According to the conventional laws of aerodynamics, insects should not fly. But by studying the flapping wings of a model based on the hawk-moth, but ten times larger, Dr Charles Ellington and his colleagues have solved the mystery. The key is the generation and maintenance of vortices - little whirlpools of air - along the leading edge of the wing.

Concorde depends on this effect to take off and land. British scientists discovered after the Second World War that a slender delta wing in slow flight generates vortices at the wing tip that create lift. Because the same wing shape is also suitable for the different conditions of supersonic flight, Concorde became possible.

Insects do not have swept wings, but generate the same

kind of vortices through flapping. The team reports in this week's *Nature* that they experimented with hawkmoths and a mechanical device called the "flapper" based on the same motion.

Tests using smoke in a wind tunnel showed that at the beginning of the moth's downstroke, when the wing is angled for maximum lift, a vortex is created at the wing root. "This creates a region of low pressure above the wing, which sucks the insect upwards," Dr Ellington says.

The vortex forms a spiral which moves along the leading edge of the wing towards the tip. The effect is to create lift on the downstroke equivalent to 1.5 times the moth's weight, more than adequate to keep it airborne.

"People have speculated that insects generate lift through creating vortices," Dr Ellington says, "but nobody had been able to see them."

Cleric who attacked Thought for Day moves on

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A CLERGYMAN who publicly attacked a BBC *Thought for the Day* broadcast by a vicar's wife is to leave his job as the Church of England's communications director.

The Rev Eric Shegog said: "I want to emphasise that discussions about my move began long before the *Thought for the Day* broadcast. All clergy at Church House work on five-year contracts which can be extended for a maximum of two years. I started in 1990, always knowing I would have to go in 1997."

Mr Shegog, who was previously head of religious broadcasting for the Independent Broadcasting Authority, covering ITV, Channel 4 and independent radio, is to become head of communications for the London diocese. He said it was understandable that many would see his move as a downwards step, adding: "But where do you go after being head of religious programming for the IBA and head of communications for the Church of England?"

Last month Anne Atkins used Radio 4's daily religious slot to condemn the Church of England for letting Southwark Cathedral be used for the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement's twentieth anniversary celebrations.

Mr Shegog complained that her broadcast had been inaccurate and "a serious error of judgment", and demanded an apology from the BBC. He faced hostile questions at the General Synod last month, when members voiced support for Mrs Atkins and said that he had no authority to condemn her.

Yesterday the Right Rev Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, said: "London is fortunate to have attracted someone of Eric Shegog's ability, commitment and experience."

Mrs Atkins, who condemned the cathedral for "celebrating 20 years of gay sex", has maintained a high profile, recently becoming agony aunt on a national newspaper.



Shegog: leaving job as church media chief

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Cleric who attacked
Thought for Day
moves on

Vets urge caution over changes to quarantine rules

By MICHAEL HORNSEY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

VETS warned yesterday against an early change to quarantine controls and called for more evidence that alternative safeguards would keep out rabies.

Karl Linklater, president of the British Veterinary Association, said vets still needed to be persuaded that a system based on vaccination and blood tests could provide the same protection as quarantine. "A standardised procedure for the microchip identification of dogs and cats would be an absolute pre-condition for any relaxation of quarantine," Dr Linklater said. "We have no problems with the science of a system based on vaccination, blood testing and microchipping, provided it is properly implemented and enforced."

"It is only within the last month that the International Standards Organisation has published part two of its standard for microchips, and individual companies have

still to adopt it." He added that the Government should not underestimate the difficulty of controlling the much larger number of pets likely to enter Britain as a result of abolition of quarantine. The association estimates that up to 250,000 dogs and cats could enter Britain each year, compared with about 9,500 now.

Dr Linklater said the gap between what looked acceptable on paper and what could be enforced in practice had been shown by the difficulty the Government had experienced in making slaughterhouses comply with controls on "mad cow" disease.

The association has been under pressure from within its own ranks to press for revision of the rabies laws. In October a group calling itself Vets in Support of Change castigated the present laws as an "anachronism and indefensible on scientific grounds".

Last week the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals announced that it would lobby the Government for a switch to a system based on vaccination, blood tests to prove that animals had been immunised, and permanent identification. The society argued that such a system could provide "an equal, if not greater, protection from rabies as quarantine".

With the Kennel Club, the RSPCA runs a computer database for microchipped dogs, which number about 300,000 of the seven million in Britain. The chip is the size of a grain of rice and is implanted in loose skin around the dog's neck. It costs £30 to have a dog microchipped and registered on the database. Each chip carries a unique ten-digit identification number for the database, which holds the animal's details.

The Government is conducting a review of quarantine. Ireland is the only other country that requires six months' quarantine for pets.



Edwin the boxer about to be injected with a microchip. The chip carries the ID number for a computer database

Pit bull terrier has become a dying breed

By RICHARD FORD

THE pit bull terrier is on the way to being eliminated from Britain owing to the success of one of the most criticised pieces of government legislation.

The breed's numbers have fallen from an estimated 8,600 to 3,500, with 430 destroyed, since the Dangerous Dogs Act

came into operation five years ago. The rest have died. Vets believe that the remainder could go within five years.

Yesterday, however, the Home Affairs Select Committee recommended a relaxation of the Act's harshest provisions, such as the death penalty for dogs that are not neutered, muzzled in public and insured. Sir Ivan Lawrence, its chairman,

said: "Despite being held up as the classic example of an Act passed in haste and in response to tabloid pressure, it was necessary and has been successful."

The committee of MPs also recommended "bail" for dogs awaiting a verdict, increased visiting rights to those held in kennels and the reintroduction of dog licences.

SATURDAY
IN THE TIMES



THE GREAT
SALES GUIDE
Where to shop till
you drop
in Weekend



DREAM CARS
Your Christmas wish-list
in Car '96

PLUS
WEEKEND MONEY
THE DIRECTORY
and 1015, our magazine
for young readers

Carpet of bluebells takes a beating from trampling feet

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S beauty spots are in danger of being trampled to death by the growing number of ramblers, campers and mountain bikers pouring into the countryside.

Jim Littlemore, an ecologist at Warwick University who has been studying the impact on woodland plants such as foxgloves, violets and bluebells, believes the time is coming when numbers visiting more popular woods will have to be controlled.

The effects of people using three woods in Warwickshire — Toci, Tilehill and Crackley — were measured by a network of pressure gauges. Mr Littlemore found that about 8 per cent of the ground became bare when 258 people a year strolled through an area of woodland. The proportion of bare ground rose to 15 per cent when the numbers rose to 1,947. The wood then became prone to erosion and more hardy, but less attractive plants moved in.

Mr Littlemore also told the British Ecological Society, meeting at Durham University, that he had studied the impact of simulated trampling on the health of bluebells. Seed production among a carpet of bluebells declined to 10 per cent of that of an

undisturbed patch after an estimated 200 people had passed through. The effect on seed production persisted for a year after the trampling. Bluebell cover also dropped sharply if the plants were trampled on every spring, the research showed.

Richard Smithers, of the Woodlands Trust, a charity which manages 800 woods with free public access, said yesterday that the trust was already using paths and rides to steer people away from sensitive areas.

□ Hopes of saving one of Britain's rarest moths, the netted carpet moth, from extinction have received a boost with the discovery of a large and healthy colony near Broughton in Furness in the Lake District. The moth, which also has a small colony in North Wales, has been listed as in need of urgent action under the Government's recently published biodiversity action plan.

Its fate is linked with an equally rare small flower, called the touch-me-not balsam, on which the larval stages of the moth depend. The balsam is so called because its pods can fire the large, heavy seeds up to two metres.

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Attractive, ready planted Victorian style, large, golden bamboo basket. Still popular today. £14.99.



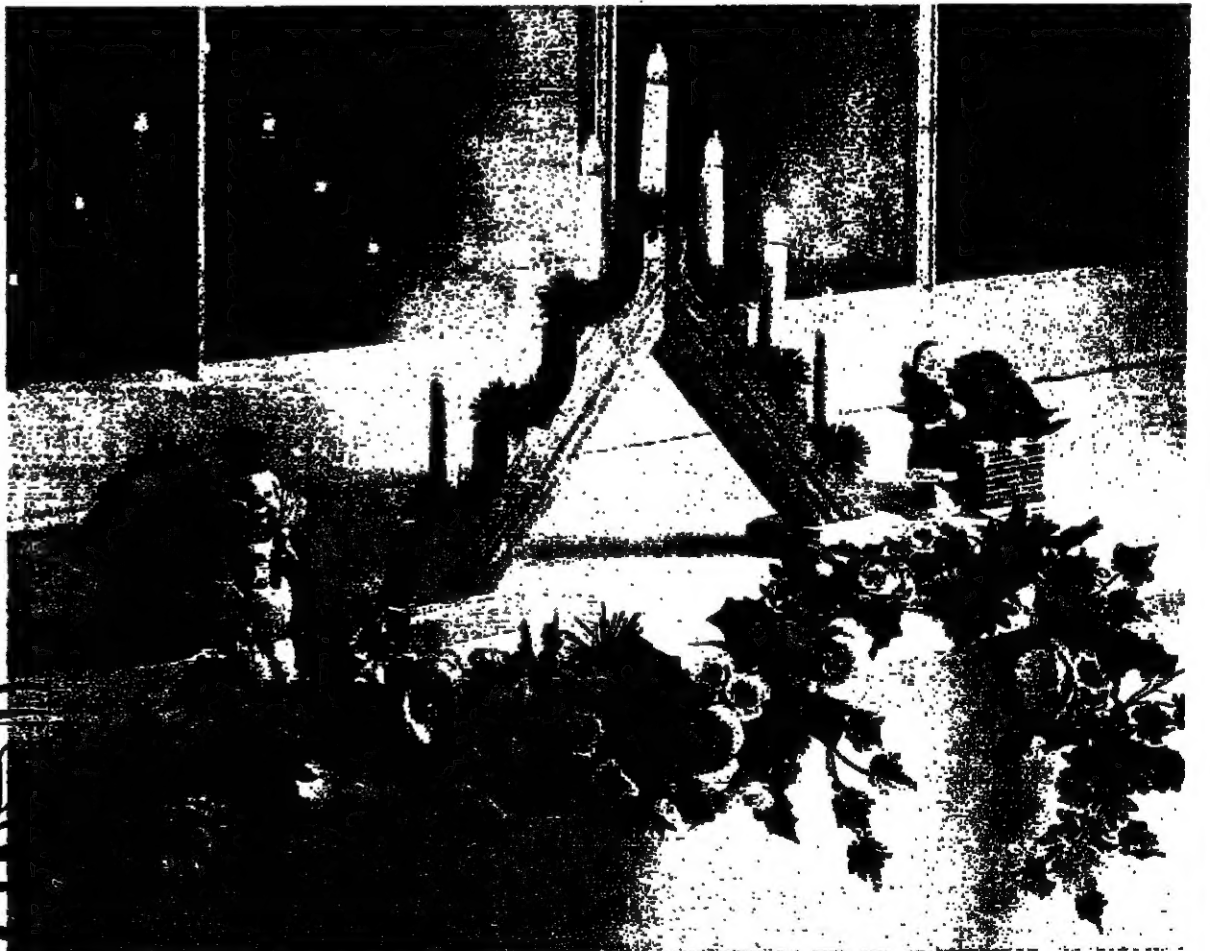
A charming Azalea in a ceramic pot for a fresh look this Christmas. £4.99.

Light up with
a candle,
coloured or
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and sizes.
From £1.99
for two.



What could be more appropriate for Christmas than a traditional red poinsettia. From £2.99. Other colours available.

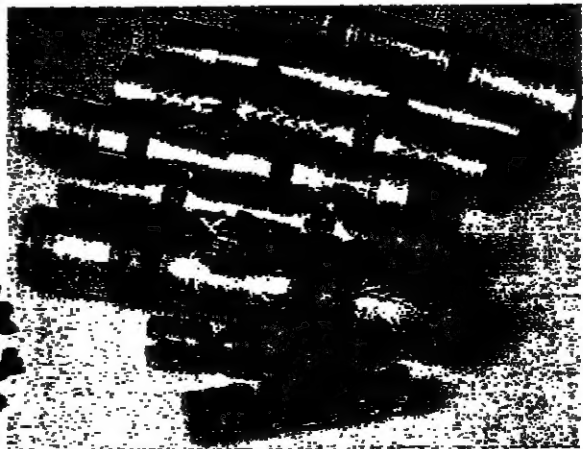
This elegant pine candlelight arrangement looks welcoming on any table, windowsill or sideboard. £19.99.



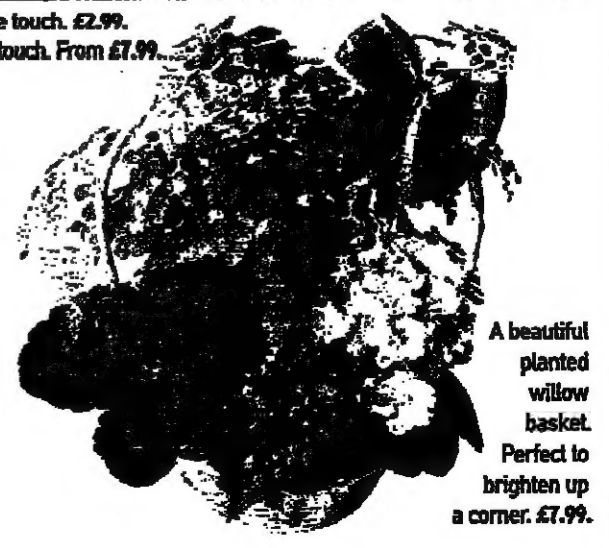
Woman and Father Christmas ceramic planters add that festive touch. £2.99. The hand assembled poinsettia and rose garland add the finishing touch. From £7.99.



A magnificent small, golden planted bamboo basket. £8.99.



Make Christmas Day go with a bang. With crackers of all kinds for children and dinner parties. From £2.25 for 12.



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SIR JOHN GIELGUD, EDWARD WOODWARD,
NICHOLAS LINDHURST, RICHARD WYSON,
KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS

"Brilliant, compelling, witty,
destined to become a classic"
The Times

"The cast is a Who's Who
of Britain's leading actors"
The Times

This Channel 4 casual extravaganza was one of
the television events of the year. Some 10 million
big and small viewers tuned in to keep it close.



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ALL ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

Prime-time ad deal raises fears over TV independence

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A LIGHT entertainment show is to become the first British prime-time television programme to be paid for entirely by an advertiser.

BT is to meet the £100,000 cost of the ITV programme *Now We're Talking*, which will be screened on December 30. It will be hosted by Phillip Schofield on the theme of communication and will feature comedy clips and interviews with such celebrities as Jim Davidson, Terry Wogan and Sue Pollard.

Aileen Boughen, a spokeswoman for BT, said that the company had approved the list of guests, but had had no direct editorial input. She added that it was considerably cheaper to pay for a programme than to buy 30 minutes of prime-time advertising at well over £1 million. "It is part of a bigger campaign aimed at improving communication in our society," she said. "Obviously, from BT's point of

view, there is a commercial interest if people can communicate more."

The deal marks a departure in the way that television programmes are funded and recalls the practice of the giant American washing-powder manufacturers in the 1950s which funded daytime dramas aimed at housewives.



Schofield: will interview stars on communication

BBC disappointed by licence fee rise

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE television licence fee is to rise by the equivalent of inflation over the next five years. Next year it will increase by £2 to £91.50 for colour sets, and by 50p to £92.00 for black and white.

Rises above inflation for the following two years will be balanced by below-inflation increases for the next two. In 1998-99 the rise will be inflation plus 3 per cent and in 1999-2000 it will be inflation plus 0.5 per cent. But in the year to 2001 it will be inflation minus 1 per cent, and in 2001-2 inflation minus 2.5 per cent.

The price-rise formula was announced yesterday in a Commons written reply by Virginia Bottomley, the Nat-

ional Heritage Secretary. It was a disappointment for John Birt, Director-General of the BBC, who had called for above-inflation increases to assist investment in digital technology. There has been no increase in the BBC licence fee in real terms for ten years.

Mr Birt said that it was "not realistic" for the Government to cut the licence fee in the fourth and fifth years of the agreement. "We will have to go back to the Government for those years. There is no question of our not being able broadly to provide the new digital and other services we have promised, but we may have to pull back in the extent and timing of our plans."

giving rise to the term "soap opera".

Television sponsorship is increasing and more shows are paid for entirely by advertisers expected to be announced in the coming year. ITV will announce today that *Blind Date*, its prime Saturday evening show hosted by Cilla Black, is to be sponsored by the travel firm Going Places.

Regulators are likely to be concerned that the trend could lead to interference with the content of programmes by advertisers. Independent Television Commission guidelines prohibit advertiser-funded or sponsored programmes from giving undue prominence to branded products, but editorial interference can occur in more subtle ways. Attempts by Heineken to change the ethnic mix of the studio audience for *Hotel Babylon*, the late-night Channel 4 programme, it backed, embarrassed the company when details of its meddling were leaked.

The BT logo will not appear on the studio set of *Now We're Talking*, but will be on the opening and closing credits. A free booklet about communication will be available via a freephone number publicised at the end of the programme. BT will buy advertising in the programme's breaks.

A Carlton spokesman said that the programme would not be a publicity vehicle for BT. "The Independent Television Commission's guidelines are there to protect viewers from being confused by a commercial message contained within a programme and we obviously endorse and have followed these guidelines."

Nick Kelvin, planning director of CIA Mediaset, a communications agency, said: "As the number of channels continues to grow, and it becomes easier for audiences to actively avoid commercials by using the remote control, co-production deals are bound to increase."



Taylor Carrington recovering from an acute chest infection at the Evelina, with Staff Nurse Alison Fletcher

On guard at frontier of life and death

By JOHN YOUNG

JACK LOFTING, a previously healthy 13-month-old, suddenly developed ugly, livid rashes on his arms and legs last week. His mother, Joanna, telephoned her doctor, who took one look at the child and had him admitted to hospital.

By then Jack was critically ill and staff at Ashford Hospital, Kent, summoned help from the Evelina Children's Hospital in southeast London. An emergency "retrieval" team collected the child and rushed him to the paediatric intensive care ward at Guy's, where acute meningococcal septicaemia was diagnosed.

Treatment included antibiotics, injections of fluid into the bone, drugs to keep the heart going and the use of an oxygen ventilator. Two days later Jack was still unconscious, but was expected to make a full recovery.

Although working constantly at the frontier of life and death, the atmosphere at the Evelina, part of the Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital Trust, is one of quiet confidence and efficiency. Several

times a week retrieval teams of doctors and nurses are dispatched to local hospitals to bring in children often close to death for emergency treatment.

Dr Ian Murdoch, the unit's director, has seen the number

of patients treble to about 900 a year in three years, largely because of the high reputation of the retrieval service.

"We collect more patients for emergency treatment than any other hospital in the country," Dr Murdoch said.

The Evelina Appeal

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Or, please debit my Visa / Access / Mastercard account

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The Evelina Appeals Office

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Guy's Hospital

St Thomas Street, SE1 9RT

Reg. Charity No. 251963

I would like my gift to help Research ☐

Care ☐ Equipment ☐ or the General Appeal Fund ☐ (tick as appropriate)

☐ Tick here if you would like a receipt.



Bishop in disaster inquiry call

The Bishop of Liverpool has called for a new investigation into the Hillsborough disaster. The Right Rev David Sheppard said yesterday that he now believed there was negligence on the part of "public bodies" which led to the tragedy, although he declined to specify them.

He has written to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, urging him to launch a second inquiry into the disaster in Sheffield seven years ago. There were two areas for concern: the closed-circuit television operation and the deployment of ambulances.

Racial retraining

Detective Constable Shane Evans, of West Midlands police, who racially insulted a black woman officer, will be sent on an equal opportunities course. An industrial tribunal awarded the woman £17,000.

Smoking ban

Smoking is to be permanently banned at three Bournemouth beaches after the success of a trial scheme last summer. Tourism chiefs hope smokers will obey the rule, which they accept cannot be enforced.

Altar attack case

An unemployed London man was remanded in custody to tomorrow accused of climbing on the altar of Westminster Cathedral and attacking two worshippers. He was ordered to be examined by doctors.

Singing muggers

A 72-year-old man was robbed by men posing as carol singers. He was grabbed and held by the lead singer while the others searched his home in Reading, Berkshire. Cash and his pension book were stolen.

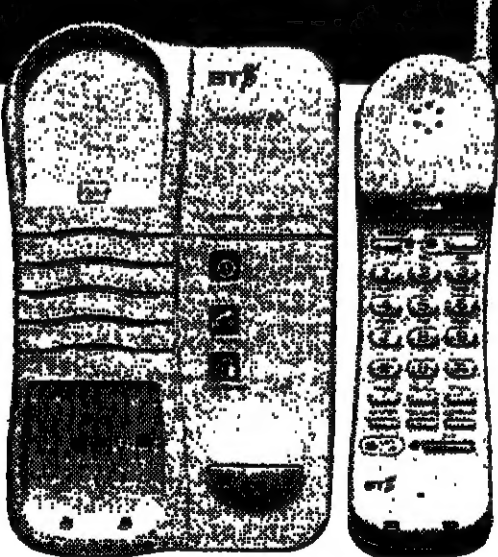
Burglar alarm

A burglar's 5am call to the RSPCA led to James O'Donnell, 26, being convicted of animal cruelty by Leicester magistrates. The burglar reported seeing a dog being kicked repeatedly.

Give something that's bound to get a good reception.

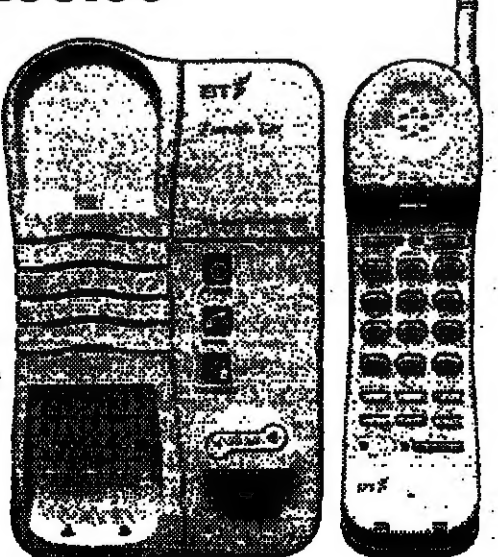
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Background noise reduction.
Up to 100 metres range, including an out-of-range warning.

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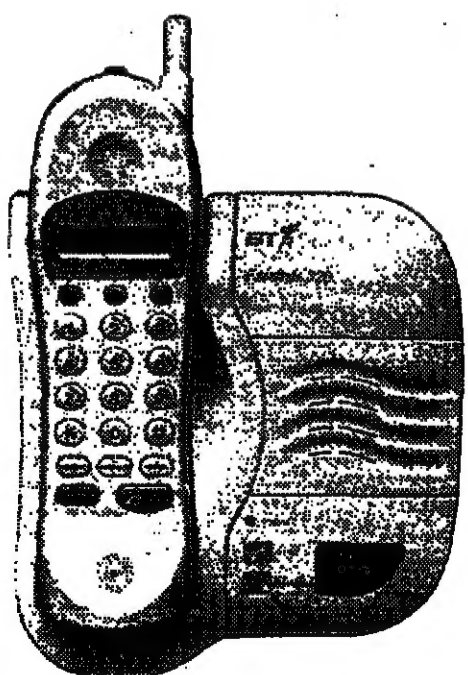
Freestyle 320 Cordless Phone
Add up to 3 extra handsets at £39.99 each.
Hands-free dialling. Intercom from base to handset.

£99.99



Freestyle 120 Cordless Phone
8 Channel auto selection which helps get the clearest reception. Backlit keypad.
Intercom from base to handset.

£89.99



Freestyle 1100 Cordless Phone
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Voice prompts to aid set up.
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ALLDERS, ARGOS, BT SHOPS, COMET, CURRYS, DIXONS, HOMEBASE, JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP, MILLER BROTHERS, NORWEL, OFFICE 1, SEEBOARD, TEMPO, THE LINK AND ALL GOOD INDEPENDENT RETAILERS.

Vato plans
squad to hunt
criminals in B

Monaco police
say about 100
lives, says he



NOTICE
TO
OWNERS

NOTICE
TO
OWNERS

Nato plans snatch squad to hunt war criminals in Bosnia

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A PROPOSAL to set up a special police squad to hunt down war criminals in the former Yugoslavia was approved yesterday by Nato defence ministers in Brussels. The ministers expressed concern that, since the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina ended more than a year ago, only seven of the 74 indicted war criminals had been captured, one of whom was convicted last month by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. Although there is a 1,700-strong international police task force already in Bosnia, its role is to monitor law and order — it is not empowered to track down indicted war criminals. The new 31,000-man Nato-led Stabilisation Force (Sfor), which takes over the peacekeeping role in Bosnia from tomorrow, is also not mandated to go after suspected war criminals. An American official at the Nato meeting said there was broad agreement in principle to send a war crimes squad to Bosnia to arrest indicted war criminals on behalf of the international tribunal. The official said the police force could operate either directly to the tribunal or under the auspices of the European Union or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The ministers

were unanimous that Sfor troops should not be given the task of arresting indicted war criminals. However, they could co-ordinate closely with the police force, the American official said.

He said the next step was to work out who would run the war crimes squad, how it would be organised and who would contribute to it.

It is acknowledged that any attempt to track down and arrest popular Serb figures such as Radovan Karadzic, the former Bosnian Serb President, could lead to confrontation and undermine the peacekeeping efforts. However, the Dayton peace accord obliges the three former war-

ring factions to hand over indicted war criminals.

The majority of the indicted war criminals are Bosnian Serbs, although both Croats and Muslims are also included.

The two most prominent indicted Serbs are Mr Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, the ex-commander of the Bosnian Serb army. Both are charged with genocide for the slaughter of up to 6,000 Muslim civilians in Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia. They are also charged over the siege of Sarajevo and the use of United Nations peacekeepers as human shields.

Other indicted war criminals still at large include 19 Serbs charged with atrocities at the Omarska prisoner of war camp. They include Zeljko Meakic, the camp commander, who is charged with genocide.

Three Yugoslav army (JNA) officers are charged with killing 261 non-Serbs who had been rounded up at a hospital in Vukovar, Croatia.

Those on the indicted list also include six Croats, who are charged with killing Muslim civilians during ethnic cleansing of the Lasva valley area in central Bosnia.

Two Serbs are charged with killings and other atrocities at Luka camp in Brcko in north-eastern Bosnia.

NATO defence ministers suffered a setback yesterday in their attempts to work more closely with Russia (Michael Evans writes). At a Brussels meeting with Igor Rodionov, their Russian counterpart, they proposed an exchange of military liaison officers, to be based at key command centres. He called the offer premature. A Russian general already serves at Nato's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe to help to co-ordinate the Russians' involvement in Bosnia.

Austerity puts paid to presents in Italy

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

YOU would not know it from the crowds thronging the festively decorated shopping streets of Rome and Milan, but Italy is experiencing what *Il Messaggero* yesterday called "an austerity Christmas".

Along with other newspapers, it published a survey showing that one in five Italians has decided not to give any Christmas presents this year. "It is not so much that we are poor, more that we feel as if we are," the paper said. "Italians are spending their money more prudently."

Italy is an affluent society, and Italians secretly believe their cities are the most charming in Europe, their women the most beautiful and their wines the most drinkable. But paradoxically they also have a tendency toward self-flagellation, accentuated at the moment by the fear that they are not really in Europe's "big league" and will fail to qualify for the single currency, despite the prodigious efforts of the centre-left Government of Professor Romano Prodi to meet the Maastricht criteria.

The survey revealed that 20 per cent of Italians (and a higher proportion in the disadvantaged South) believe that they are "poor". Even more significantly, 43 per cent think they soon will be. Italians are not relishing the prospect of paying a "Euro tax" next year to help to reduce the budget deficit.

Monaco princesses 'lax about private lives', says brother

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

PRINCE ALBERT of Monaco, the heir to the Mediterranean principality, said yesterday that publicity surrounding his sisters' troubled private lives may have been partly of their own making.

"My sisters have not always taken or wanted to take precautions because it was too constraining," the 39-year-old bachelor prince said, adding that he had gone to great lengths to keep his emotional life out of the public eye. "Because I saw what happened to my sisters, I protected myself even more... we have been horribly treated like film stars, and people think they have the right to intrude," Prince Albert told *Le Figaro* newspaper, on the eve of a trip to Rome to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the Grimaldi dynasty.

Asked why he has yet to marry, the prince said he was not linked to "anybody in a

serious way" at the moment, noting the problems awaiting his future spouse as the wife of a royal family's head.

"The task will not be easy... as for myself, from an early age I have become used to the incessant pressure of photographers... I don't want to get married just to please people. Of course, my future wife will be a princess, that is important, but above all she will be the person with whom I will share my life. I don't want to make a mistake."

Neither Princess Caroline nor Princess Stephanie will be at the Rome celebrations to mark the opening of a museum exhibition dedicated to the Grimaldis, but the model Claudia Schiffer is expected to attend as Prince Albert's companion. Princess Stephanie was granted a divorce in October, a month after her husband, Daniel Ducruet, was pictured cavorting with a Belgian striptease dancer. Her older sister, Caroline, was featured recently in gossip columns in the company of Prince Ernst August of Hanover, a married man.

Referring to rumours surrounding his accession, the prince said "no date has been fixed" and that his father, Prince Rainier III, would transfer power "calmly" when he saw fit. "He is a shy man who hides his true personality behind his modesty," the prince said of his father, who has faced unpleasant publicity over the emotional entanglements of his daughters.



Prince Albert dislikes "film star" treatment



Kofi Annan is hugged by Ismail Razali, president of the General Assembly, after he was sworn in as Secretary-General at the UN

Annan promises to streamline the UN for 21st-century role

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

KOFI ANNAN, the new United Nations Secretary-General, said yesterday that he hoped to work with member states to "reposition" the organisation for the next century.

In an amiable press conference that marked a break with the haughty style of his predecessor, Boutros Boutros Ghali, Mr Annan, who takes office on January 1, said he planned to continue streamlining the bureaucracy while seeking consensus on more fundamental changes in the UN's role. "What I would hope to do during the period I am in office is to work with the member states and redefine the role of this organisation and perhaps prepare it for the 21st century," he said.

He added that he expected the first results of this debate within his first six months in office. Mr Annan's election as the next UN chief has raised hopes that the United States, which backed his candidacy, may now make good on its \$1.4 billion (\$338 million) in arrears to the organisation.

Mr Annan said he was confident that the Clinton Administration would do all it could to repay the debt, and that the UN would also do its part with continuing reforms. "I expect to work with the Administration, and through them the Congress, to get the US to pay the money due to the organisation," he said.

Mr Annan, a career UN official who has run the UN peacekeeping department for the last three years, emphasised that he would manage the UN with a "collegial style" and sought to reassure the embattled UN staff.

"I am not setting out with the

objective that I have to lay off staff, but if, as part of the reform process, some departures are necessary it will have to be done, but it will be done in a humane and sensitive manner," he said.

Mr Annan hinted that Britain, which had strongly backed him, might lose its top post in the UN hierarchy in return for another similar position. British diplomats have already begun lobbying for Britain to keep the post of Under-Secretary-General of political affairs when Marrack Goulding, now the highest-ranking Briton at UN headquarters, leaves the post to become head of St Antony's, Oxford, next year.

Mr Goulding took the UN job a decade ago when Sir Brian Urquhart retired after many years at the organisation. Mr Annan said he wanted to "rotate" the top jobs between different countries so that no nation came to believe that it had a right to a particular post.

With Mr Annan's promotion from head of peacekeeping, vacancies now exist in both the department of peacekeeping and political affairs, the two most important units of the UN secretariat. France, which lifted its threat to veto Mr Annan's appointment, has been pushing for a high-level job at the UN.

The new Secretary-General said that the 15-nation Security Council reflected the political and economic realities of 1945 and should be brought up to date. He endorsed claims by Germany and Japan to permanent membership of the council, but added that "they will get in with others".

Leading article, page 17

The baby on the left finds it hard to sit up.

In a month she might have the occasional spasm.

In a year she won't be walking because her legs will be taut one moment and floppy the next.

Then her problems will really begin. People will notice she's different. They'll start treating her differently.

Right at this point her rights to education, employment, and housing will be put at her control because she can't control her limbs.

And it doesn't get any better. Later, she'll find entering society

impossible because she won't be able to enter polling stations, public buildings or public transport.

Which brings us to today: Human Rights Day, when we ask you to remember that disabled people have just as many rights as non-disabled people.

Scope currently works, not just today, but every day for people with cerebral palsy so that they might lead a full life on equal terms with everybody else.

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Spielberg rescues star's Oscar

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

STEVEN Spielberg, the director, has presented Clark Gable's only Oscar to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences after buying it anonymously at auction for a record \$607,500 (£368,000).

The surprise gift brings a treasured symbol of Hollywood's golden era back to the institution that awards the Oscars. The Academy, which frowns on the resale of its awards, had failed in a last-minute bid to stop the auction at Christie's Beverly Hills branch with a court order.

With a chipped marble base and brass showing through its gold-plating, the Best Actor Oscar Gable won in 1934 for his role as a reporter in *It Happened One Night* was bought by Spielberg with a telephone bid.

The previous record price for an Oscar was \$563,500 paid in 1993 for Vivien Leigh's Best Actress award for *Gone With The Wind*.

Huge budget cuts enrage academics on 'white' campuses

CONSTERNATION and outrage have greeted the news of steep financial cuts to what are known in South Africa as the historically white universities and sweeping measures of redistribution towards the historically black universities.

University vice-chancellors at Rhodes, Natal, Witwatersrand and other "white" universities have indignantly pointed out that blacks already form half of their student bodies and that the number is still rising sharply. They claim there is no sense in inflicting such large cuts on the country's best universities in order to pour money into the old "tribal col-

Traditionally white universities are losing out in the post-apartheid era, R. W. Johnson reports from Johannesburg. But they have allies among the swelling ranks of black middle-class parents

leges", once reviled as apartheid creations but now, ironically, embraced by the Government as the most "progressive" section of higher education. The vice-chancellors have given warning that such measures are bound to lead to the forced redundancies of many faculties and the emigration of others. Certainly, such measures in

education will do nothing to slow white emigration in general, currently running at 3,000 to 4,000 a month. The fate of the universities has enormous symbolic as well as practical significance to such people, who are painfully aware that in the countries to the north, African nationalism has devastated universities without exception.

The row has highlighted a degree of confusion in the Government's policy. For months, universities have been pressing Sibiso Bonga, the Education Minister, to inform them of next year's subsidy level. Only now, with campuses closed and with the new financial year beginning on January 1, have universities learnt the facts. Mr Bonga has criticised the universities for releasing the figures which are, he says, still provisional. This leaves universities confused about what they are supposed to do after January 1, especially since the Government has just issued a higher education Green Paper which calls for a doubling of the

number of students. This cannot be achieved if universities are simultaneously being cut back.

The ministry operates a subsidy formula but successive cutbacks mean that by last year the old white universities were receiving only 68 per cent of their subsidy figure, a shortfall they met by cutting faculty salaries (down almost 50 per cent in real terms since 1990) and on slicing library and maintenance expenditure. Now the Government has cut that figure again to 59 per cent — but simultaneously increased the subsidy to "black" universities, some of which are receiving as much as 143 per cent of their subsidy figure.

In addition, the Government has set up a "redress fund" to funnel money exclusively to the old black campuses. Critics allege that the "black" universities will not be able to use this money constructively, for they are racked by endless discontent and are a byword for low standards.

The greatest irony, however, is that the "white" universities have made enormous efforts to increase their number of black students — in some cases by digging into library and maintenance money to offer scholarships to disadvantaged students. It is precisely this that will have to stop — as well as

becoming far tougher about non-payment of fees by black students. Black students have already given notice that any such moves will create a major explosion and already campuses are braced for a further round of trouble when they reopen in the new year.

A frantic round of bargaining lies ahead. The secret weapon of the old liberal universities is that the rising black middle class — including Cabinet ministers — invariably place their children there. They will be as unhappy as the universities themselves at the prospect of disruption ahead if Mr Bonga does not give ground quickly.

Asian fundraiser was dinner guest at White House

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

CHARLES TRIE, an Asian conduit for suspect donations to the Clintons, yesterday brought further humiliation to the White House when it emerged that he had maintained close ties to the President long after aides had questioned his probity.

The entrepreneur had a conversation with the President at a White House Christmas dinner last week, days before his role was made public. Mr Trie is the central figure in the puzzle over \$640,000 (£400,000) in questionable contributions to the defence fund created for the President and his wife two years ago.

Designed to defray the spiralling legal costs of cases involving the Clintons, including Whitewater and the Paula Jones sex harassment action, the fund, which faces bills of more than \$2 million (£1.19 million), said this week that it had been forced to return the dubious contributions.

Mr Clinton, who described Mr Trie as an "old friend", said he had known of investigators' suspicions about the money, in large part raised through American chapters of a controversial Buddhist sect based in Taiwan.

"In all these fundraising endeavours, the rule should be that all cheques should be checked to make sure that not only as fast but even any appearance of impropriety should be removed," Mr Clinton said.

According to investigators, who were asked to examine the donations handed to the defence fund in March this year, many of them were in the names of students or waiters who later admitted that they had not made any direct or indirect contributions to the defence fund.

Despite these suspicions and advice from senior aides



Jones sex case is adding to legal costs for Clintons

that inquiries should be made about Mr Trie, he was one of 250 guests at the White House last Friday. In the middle of the inquiry last year he was appointed as a presidential adviser to an influential American trade commission on Asia. Although the White House denied any link between the appointment and his fundraising, he was said to have been considered a "must" for the panel.

Clinton aides also failed to inform the Democratic National Committee of their con-

cerns. Until October, Mr Trie served on the national finance board, a select panel of those who have given or raised at least \$350,000 for the party.

Mr Trie met Mr Clinton in Little Rock when the then Governor frequented his restaurant, Fu Lin. In 1988 he was appointed by Mr Clinton to the state's Extinguisher Board, and their two stars have risen in tandem.

The Taiwanese entrepreneur first made big political contributions to the Democratic Party in 1994 and the following year he wrote an Asian Pacific American Fundraising Plan for the Clinton-Gore campaign, outlining an ambitious programme with a target of up to \$2 million in contributions.

"Asian Pacific Americans are second only to Jewish Americans in per capita contributions from ethnic [donors], to Democratic candidates," the memo said.

He has scouted for business in Taiwan with White House aides and regularly flaunted his Clinton connections in Peking and other Asian cities. He materialised at the Clinton's 1992 victory celebration in Little Rock, during an American trade visit to China and has even escorted wealthy Asians to the White House.

"Most mysterious is his relationship with Ching Hai, a self-styled master of Zen Buddhism who claims millions of disciples around the world and almost 100,000 in the United States. Almost all of the money raised for the legal fund came from events organised by the Suma Ching Hai International Association.

Followers of the hybrid Buddhist doctrine have been known to drink Ms Ching's bathwater as a cure for disease. In Taiwan, her sect is under investigation for alleged accounting irregularities.

Official accused over stolen cash

New York: Paul Cherick, the manager of the Council of Jewish Organizations of Boro Park, in the Brooklyn area, has been charged with conspiring to steal more than \$600,000 (£359,000) in government funds. He was also accused of diverting \$15,000 to a public official, identified in media reports as Dov Hilel, a New York state assemblyman. Mr Hilel does not face any charges. (AP)



Bethlehem's star tree caught up in red tape

Away in Manger Square, a member of Bethlehem's Tourist Police looks down on a space reserved for a 46ft Christmas tree from Finland that has fallen foul of the Israeli Agriculture Ministry. Elias Freil, the Palestinian Mayor of Bethlehem, yesterday accused Israel of "political provocation" over the tree (Christopher Walker in Bethlehem writes).

Mr Freil said: "This is deliberate. I appeal to the Israeli Ministry of Tourism to stop it. They cannot think like this. They would have sent an 'unhealthy tree'." The Mayor showed a fax from Helsinki

stating: "I want to inform you that the tree sent from Finland has been stopped in [an] Israeli port due to unexpected quarantine regulations, but as time is running out, the same Finn who donated the original tree has now helped by donating a tall and beautiful local tree with its decorations." Mr Freil, a Christian who will be celebrating the second Christmas since Israeli mili-

tary occupation was replaced by Palestinian self-rule, rejected the offer. "We do not want any tree grown in Israel. If necessary, we will decorate the Palestinian fir trees already growing near the Church of the Nativity in order to invoke the Christmas spirit." Only Doron, a spokeswoman for the Israeli Tourism Ministry, said the tree had been held up "simply because

there is a law against the import of plants from abroad before they have been cleared of disease". She added: "It is up to the Ministry of Agriculture whether it will be in time for Christmas. This is the law."

A similar row occurred in 1993 when Israeli barred the entry of a 50ft tree for Bethlehem donated by Norway after the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord. "Whatever the... law, Israel should realise that actions like this are an international public relations disaster," commented one European diplomat.

Alcoholics guided to 12 steps

FROM IAN BRIDIE IN WASHINGTON

AN AMERICAN study of three ways to treat alcoholism has found all were effective, but Alcoholics Anonymous's 12-step approach was best.

The researchers concluded that medical science has far to go in reaching the heart of alcoholic therapy and that treatment of problem drinkers could benefit greatly from the development of counselling, continued research into the brain chemistry of alcoholism, and work on new drugs.

The eight-year study involved more than 1,700 patients and 100 investigators at 30 clinics in the United States. The cost of \$27 million (£16 million) was borne by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, a government body. Alcoholism claims 100,000 American lives a year and is reckoned to cost \$100 billion (£60 billion) in lost work and medical expenses.

The study tested the theory that alcoholics could be "matched" to the best treatment programme, based on the psychological factors that made them problem drinkers. "In general, this idea did not pan out," said Enoch Gordis, director of the institute.

The other two programmes were cognitive behaviour therapy — trying to teach skills to resist situations that increase the chance of drinking — and motivational enhancement therapy — promoting individual responsibility to overcome drinking from inner resources.



Drag Queen Barbie: a takeoff of the Ken doll

Barbie the drag queen hits shops

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

TRANSVESTITE and slutish versions of the normally immaculately preened Barbie doll are being made and sold for high prices in California.

Satirical models such as Drag Queen Barbie, Hooker Barbie and Voodoo Barbie are doing the rounds among adult wits in San Francisco. The unauthorised versions lampoon the long-popular Mattel dolls which are, once again, a best-selling Christmas item in American shops. Retailers have reported shortages of Mattel-made Twirling Ballerina Barbie and Enchanted Evening Barbie.

The Anti-Barbies include the Trailer Trash Barbie, a doll dressed as a grubby denizen of one of the rundown caravan parks that litter the American wasteland. She has a cigarette dangling from her mouth, a toy baby slung over her shoulder, black roots in her blonde hair, and an accompanying caption says: "My Daddy owns 17 of the best houses in the country."

Voodoo Barbie is swathed in cheesecloth and stabbed through with pins. Drag Queen Barbie is a version of the popular male Ken doll dressed in the most flamboyant fashion. There is even talk of a Pickled Barbie — in the fashion of a Dorian Hirst artwork.

Anti-Barbies are selling for as much as \$60 (£40) — and Mattel lawyers are watching for copyright infringement.

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Lima raid to



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Lima raid tests resolve of populist President

Alberto Fujimori appeared to have beaten inflation and political violence. Now the economic magic seems to be failing, and guerrillas have struck a symbolic target, says John Crabtree

PRESIDENT FUJIMORI has based his no-nonsense reputation on having dispatched Peru's two guerrilla movements, Sendero Luminoso and the Revolutionary Tupac Amaru Movement (MRTA). The latter's sudden reappearance as the perpetrators of the Lima hostage crisis threatens to damage his standing at home and abroad.

For much of the 1980s, the country was racked by violence from these two organisations. The Maoist-inspired Sendero set in motion what it hoped would be a "peasants' war" aimed at destroying the Peruvian state, provoking an equally severe backlash from the armed forces. Some 25,000 people were killed.

The MRTA was rather more restrained. Taking the Cuban revolution as its ideological cue, it sought to raise a rather more conventional, "anti-imperialist" standard, attacking principally America and more symbolic targets.

As recently as 1990, these two insurgencies represented a real threat to political stability. Faced by a combination of rampant hyper-inflation and the proliferation of political murders and sabotage, Señor Fujimori owes much of his popularity since then to having restored relative calm. But this involved tough measures. Justifying himself by the need

to give greater autonomy to the army, he closed Congress in April 1992. Since then, through various manoeuvres, he has managed to rewrite the constitution, remove the bar on immediate re-election and get himself re-elected.

In spite of the Government's claims to have crushed the guerrillas, it has long been clear that they continued to operate at a reduced scale in various parts of the country. Indeed, Señor Fujimori acknowledged as much in this year's annual independence day speech on July 28.

Sendero, however, has been more in evidence than the MRTA. Consequently, the authorities have repeatedly refused to dismantle their anti-terrorist procedures, including the use of "faceless judges" to try those accused under draconian terrorist laws. The hostage crisis shows that a small group of motivated people can wreak havoc. For the MRTA, these are make-or-break tactics, de-



Police seize a suspected guerrilla outside the Japanese Ambassador's residence. Right, comfort is given to one woman freed by the gunmen, who threatened to kill the other hostages



Senior British envoy is held

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND BILL FROST

ROGER CHURCH, deputy head of the British mission in Lima, is among the hostages but has managed to telephone his embassy to say he is unharmed.

Mr Church was unable to say whether any other British passport-holders were among the hostages and could give no further details of what was happening in the building. However, the Foreign Office said yesterday that it was keeping in close touch with the Peruvian authorities, and had put into effect the usual emergency arrangements for dealing with incidents of this kind.

John Illman, the British Ambassador, also attended the Japanese reception, but left shortly before the terrorists seized the building. He was yesterday co-ordinating efforts to get Mr Church released. Britain, which has long experience of successful hostage negotiations, said it was ready to consider any request by the Peruvians for help, but has so far not been approached.

Mr Church, 50, joined the Foreign

Office in 1965. He then rose through the ranks before taking the post in Lima two years ago. He was previously Deputy High Commissioner in the Bahamas, and has also served in Abu Dhabi, Bonn, East Berlin, Lusaka, Madras, Colombo and Quito.

Last night Mr Church was described by friends and colleagues as "stable and calm ... unlikely to lose his cool in a

DIPLOMATS

crisis". While Deputy High Commissioner in Bermuda in 1991, he impressed those who met him with a "typically British sang-froid". During his tour of duty he played host to Terry Waite after the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy was freed from captivity in Beirut.

Eileen Carron, publisher of the *Bermuda Tribune*, said Mr Church "had a very military bearing. He is very self-contained and very restrained. If anyone

could face this ordeal without going into a panic, it is him."

Last night Mr Church's wife, Kathleen, and two sons, aged 22 and 19, were being kept in close touch with developments. A British Embassy source in Lima said "they were bearing up well".

Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, has set up a crisis centre in Bonn to deal with the seizure of Heribert Wöckel, the German Ambassador, held together with the Austrian Ambassador and other foreign diplomats. The Foreign Ministry said Herr Wöckel was being held with around 15 others in one room of the residence. The German Ambassador to Bolivia has been ordered to go to Lima to take over the embassy, and a crisis specialist was last night flying out from Bonn.

Arthur Schuschnigg, the Austrian Ambassador, was also understood to be unhurt and was being held in one of the residence's bedrooms, according to a spokeswoman in Vienna.



signed to portray the Government as trampling on human rights at a time when Señor Fujimori's popularity appears to be in decline.

For the President, the crisis is one that puts his credibility on the line. On the one hand, foreign governments have been urging him to proceed with caution, avoiding bloodshed at all cost. On the other, an overly conciliatory response threatens to make him look weak and vacillating, not least in the eyes of Peru's armed forces, which have borne the brunt of the war against the insurgency.

The outcome, therefore, is likely to have important consequences. Señor Fujimori has made no secret of his desire for another five years in office,

once his term ends in 2000. But his stock is in decline. Opinion polls suggest he no longer enjoys the same public trust and loyalty as during his first term. There are others who are in the ascendant, for example the Mayor of Lima, Alberto Andrade.

Part of the problem is that Señor Fujimori's economic magic appears to be failing. Having conquered hyper-inflation and then presided over three years of rapid growth, culminating in last year's pre-election boom, the economy this year has stagnated. Faced at the beginning of the year with a current account deficit of Mexican proportions, Señor Fujimori was forced to slam on the brakes. Having awakened expectations of a better future, he has been forced to back-pedal.

One of the most difficult problems he faces is how to ensure that the average Peruvian feels the economic benefits of his Government's policies. Many more people work in the so-called "informal sector", where incomes are extremely low, than in proper jobs. The economic recovery of the past three years has not brought an appreciable difference to employment levels, while the yawning gap separating rich and poor appears to have widened.

At the same time, Señor Fujimori has been roundly criticised for establishing an autocratic regime in which

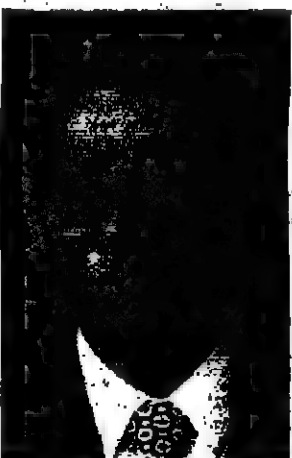
democratic institutions have had little role to play in decision-making.

Political parties have been eclipsed, and play only a minor role in Congress. The ruling Cambio 90-Nueva Mayoría routinely outvotes the opposition and, broadly speaking, does Señor Fujimori's bidding. The military, meanwhile, exercises strong influence behind the scenes.

By selecting the Japanese Ambassador's residence for its attack, the MRTA has chosen a symbolic target. Partly because of his own origins as a second generation immigrant, Señor Fujimori has made much of the need to develop ties with East Asia and Japan in particular. Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, visited Lima this year, and Tokyo has offered Señor Fujimori preferential aid terms.

The author is an Oxford-based specialist in Peruvian politics.

Matthew Parris, page 16



Fujimori: has admitted failure to quell terror

Small rebel group has bloody history

By MICHAEL DYNES

THE Revolutionary Tupac Amaru Movement, which staged yesterday's spectacular hostage seizure at the Japanese Ambassador's house, is the smaller of the two left-wing guerrilla organisations operating in Peru.

Founded in 1983 by student radicals committed to a Castro version of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the movement seeks

ties in rural areas. Tupac Amaru specialises in urban terror. Even at its peak, however, it never had more than 1,000 fighters, compared to more than 10,000 recruited for its Maoist rival.

When President Fujimori took office in 1990, he threw the Government's internal security apparatus into an all-out war on both guerrilla movements. Human rights groups estimate that more than 1,200 suspected rebels have been jailed on charges of subversion.

Under the "repentance laws", however, suspected guerrillas have been able to reduce their sentences by pointing the finger at their revolutionary comrades. As a result, many civilians have been jailed on flimsy evidence.

In 1992, the Peruvian Government chalked up two big counter-insurgency successes with the capture of Victor Polay Campos, the movement's leader, and Abimael Guzmán, the head of Sendero Luminoso.

to destabilise the central government and expel foreign business interests through "armed propaganda".

The name comes from the 16th-century Inca leader, Tupac Amaru, who led an Indian uprising against the Spanish colonisers. Despite its short history, the movement has been very active, mounting a series of bloody bank robberies, kidnappings and killings throughout the 1980s.

Unlike the Maoist Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), which concentrated its activ-



Michel Mining, the Red Cross chief in Peru, carries medicine to injured hostages in Lima yesterday

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Dr Thomas Stuttford on the problems faced by doctors when diagnosing dementia in the elderly, chemotherapy treatment for cancer and hair loss, seasonal warnings over preparing food and drinking too much — and why a dose of mistletoe can be good for you

Why Saunders could not have been faking it



Ernest Saunders: he was suffering from dementia, but it was not Alzheimer's

Ernest Saunders's dealings in the City while in charge of Guinness may have made him a crook in the eyes of the world, but it would be beyond the ability of the most gifted and subtle actor to simulate dementia. Saunders was not a malingerer, it was his doctors who were at fault by making a very common diagnostic mistake.

The doctors mistook the dementia of Alzheimer's disease for the pseudo-dementia of the depressed, elderly melancholic. Saunders was demented, but not with Alzheimer's. It may well be that he is not as quick intellectually as in his heyday and when he is seen on television it is hard to believe that he ever had the acute brain he must once have employed.

The slowing of his cognitive faculties — medical speak for intellect — may well have accentuated the effect of the depression from which he was obviously suffering, and which had been induced by the change of his circumstances, from the boardroom to the dock, and then to prison.

Nobody recovers from Alzheimer's. It is a degenerative disease and the damage done to the brain is, at the moment, irreversible. Although any overlying depression

has lifted, Saunders will still be faced with the disadvantages of having a brain that has shrunk, like many other 60-year-old brains. Fortunately for him, he is enthusiastic, has great experience of the City, and is articulate enough still to make a very good living as a consultant and lecturer.

Saunders may have made his own doctors look foolish, but he has done medicine a great service: he has drawn attention to the dangers of labelling all senile dementia as Alzheimer's. The Saunders case has also shown that the amount of cerebral atrophy (brain shrinkage) which can be demonstrated and measured on an MRI scan in older people cannot be directly related to their loss of intellectual power.

It sounds almost unkind now to suggest that a patient has dementia, whereas to say that they are suffering from Alzheimer's makes the diagnosis socially acceptable to relatives, although it has terrifying consequences for the patient.

Unfortunately, as a result of accepting this new convention, there are many elderly people who are condemned to a lifetime of misery and institutional care who may well have needed only a course of pills to enable them to live at home and be a reasonably cheerful member of the family and community.

There are many different causes of dementia. Alzheimer's is frequently confused with multi-infarct dementia, in which a series of small strokes has destroyed enough of the brain to cause intellectual loss. The damage from each episode leaves the patient progressively less intelligent,

so that their downhill path tends to be step by step.

Multi-infarct syndrome is usually associated with high blood pressure, although it can also be brought on by small strokes caused by clots in the cerebral vessels as well as by little haemorrhages. It is possible to see the circumscribed area of the brain which has been damaged on an MRI scan.

This type of dementia is often associated with depression and it is interesting to note that in Ernest Saunders's picture taken after his release from prison there was quite a marked facial asymmetry, such as might have occurred after a small stroke.

Other forms of dementia can be a reaction to drugs, whether they are prescribed or taken in the form of alcohol. The good news about alcohol is that many of the mental changes which are associated with it, if it is taken in grossly excessive quantities, are reversible. If taken in small quantities by the elderly, alcohol improves the intellect.

Pseudo-dementia, which afflicted Saunders, can be distinguished from other causes of dementia by making a careful neurological examination and taking a very detailed history, as well as by the use of MRI scanners and other clinical aids.

When depression is causing dementia, there are a few common clues: these patients tend to be more concerned by their memory loss than those with Alzheimer's, they have the sleep pattern of a depressive, their appetite is lost, their symptoms vary depending on the time of the day, and they are constipated. Above all, they improve when treated with anti-depressants.

A small price to pay

Linda McCartney's fans were delighted that she looked so well at her first public appearance after a long course of chemotherapy. Mrs McCartney was seen on a video screen when she accepted an award from an animal rights group.

Only Mrs McCartney's hair gives any evidence of the heavy-dose chemotherapy she has been having in Los Angeles. The effect of this type of chemotherapy on hair growth is one disadvantage of the treatment but, compared with some of its other possible side-effects, is a small price to pay. Once treatment has been finished, the hair growth returns to normal.

Hair is constantly shed and replaced by new growth. At any one time, between 80 and 90 per cent of hair is in its active growing phase. If a person is unwell, or convalescing, more hairs are in the resting phase. After chemotherapy, hair tends to come out by the handful. When normal, cyclical hair loss is greater than usual, the only indication of problem, without looking at the roots under a microscope, is that more hairs are caught in the comb each morning.

Alopecia is the technical name for hair loss. In *Alopecia totalis*, which has affected Princess Caroline of Monaco, all of the hair of the body is lost because of an autoimmune disease. In this condition, all the hair goes into the resting phase. When it drops out it is not replaced by any new, actively growing hair.

The good news for the Princess is that in more than 70 per cent of cases the condition is temporary and that within a couple of years the hair regrows and is very often thicker and curlier than it was before.

Treatments for *Alopecia totalis* are available, and it may, like other autoimmune diseases, respond to the use of powerful immuno-suppressant drugs. Unfortunately, these drugs have their own dangers and it is usually considered that the risks associated with what is only a possible benefit are too great to warrant their use.

In other cases of alopecia the hair loss is patchy; in these instances the chances of a complete recovery are even greater. The patches can occur in the beard as well as on the scalp. If the affected area is very small, injection into the skin of triamcinolone will



Linda McCartney, with her husband Paul, during her first public appearance after chemotherapy treatment

sometimes encourage regrowth.

As with any autoimmune disease, alopecia is often a consequence of exposure to stress, either physical or mental. It can sometimes also be associated with other autoimmune diseases, in particular, those that induce thyroid dysfunction.

The most common form of alopecia is male-pattern baldness — the normal thinning of the hair — which starts in late adolescence and gains pace as the person grows older and which, despite its name,

can also affect women.

When there is premature balding, there is usually a strong family history, and as the supposition is that male-pattern baldness is androgen-dependent, it is assumed that there is a relationship between baldness and virility. Apart from these two factors, there is no known precipitating cause and the only treatment that is licensed as being effective in a proportion of cases is the use of the drug minoxidil, Regaine, applied to the scalp. Regaine can now be bought over the counter.

Medicinal mistletoe Sober facts of drink

THE only medical significance of mistletoe for most of us is the risk of catching herpes or glandular fever while kissing beneath it. Herbalists, however, have used mistletoe for centuries to treat high blood pressure and anxiety. But a potentially more important medical use has begun to be investigated.

Mistletoe, a toxic plant if swallowed accidentally, has been found to have cytotoxic activity — it interferes with cellular activity. This has led to the prescription of Iscador, the technical name for mistletoe extract, for a variety of malignant diseases. Iscador has been particularly favoured as a therapy by those doctors who are interested in alternative medicine. They welcome its apparent ability to inhibit the growth of malignant cells while also boosting the immune system.

At the British Cancer Centre some of the patients are treated with Iscador prepared from mistletoe grown on oak trees, others with Iscador grown from apples. Some cancers were considered apple-sensitive, whereas the same sort of tumour in other patients needed the oak.

A WORD of warning before Christmas. The belief that women become drunk faster than men — and sober up more slowly — is not another example of male chauvinism, but the statement of physiological fact.

Even women who are used to drinking and are of normal build lack an enzyme system as efficient as that of their male drinking companions. In men, some of the alcohol is metabolised in the stomach, whereas in women still in their reproductive years the whole of the process has to take place in the liver.

Alcohol stays longer in the stomach of men than women, in whom it rapidly passes through into the small intestine. Alcohol is more quickly absorbed through the wall of the intestine than that of the stomach, so that blood alcohol levels rise faster in women.

Changes in behaviour after alcohol are related to personality rather than to gender. Women tend to be less aggressive than men. Men who become abnormally aggressive when drinking are usually those who, when sober, are unusually tense.

Try not to let the turkey share the fridge with a pudding

THE tragic outbreak of E coli 0157 in Lancashire, and the recently announced statistics of outbreaks of salmonella DT104, as well as the more common forms of this type of food poisoning, have come in time to remind everybody of the need to be careful when cooking the Christmas turkey and lamb.

Uncooked meat should, whenever possible, be stored separately from prepared foods. But when — as in most households — there is only one refrigerator, the uncooked bird should be kept on the bottom shelf. This ensures that its bacteria-laden juices do not drip over the cheese and the remnants of yesterday's pudding.

Using the same kitchen saucapans,

knives, forks and chopping boards for both cooked and uncooked meat is a sure way of spreading salmonella.

If the same knife is to be used to carve the joint as to cut the loaf, it must be thoroughly sterilised first. Kitchen surfaces are a regular haunt of organisms, which gather and reproduce in the debris lurking in any crack.

Surfaces should be swabbed down regularly with a disinfectant. The greatest dangers in the kitchen are the dishcloth and tea-towel. Both are admirable media in which bacteria can grow. Dishwashers may spoil your wine glasses and spot-mark silver, but they do sterilise the crockery and cutlery.

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A tale of

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A tale of gastronomy in two cities

London has been hailed as having the best restaurants in the world, but New Yorker Irwin Stelzer says there is still room for improvement

This is a tale of two cities. In both, it is the best of times. New York's renaissance has already been widely recorded in the British press: crime down, streets cleaner, cash registers ringing. Wall Street bonuses bountiful by the standards of everyone except their recipients. And London's emergence as the hottest European city, swinging and prosperous, has been told in cover stories in mass-circulation Newsweek and in bibles of the ultra-chic, such as *Vanity Fair* and *Tatler*.

But Londoners are starting to overdo it a bit, gloating that their town has replaced New York as "the place where it is all happening. It has become the gastronomic centre of the world," according to the fortieth edition of the *Egon Ronay Hotel & Restaurant Guide*. (Paris, says Ronay, is "old hat.") Indeed, the chef-as-celebrity and as multi-site entrepreneur is a new London phenomenon, with cookbook signings and guest appearances so frequent that one wonders whether these new stars have any time left to spend in their kitchens.

Fortunately, thanks to the new Zagat surveys of the restaurant scenes in both cities, we can separate brag from fact. The Zagat restaurant guide persuaded more than 18,000 New Yorkers and 1,700 Londoners — the Brits being surveyed for the first time — to give their views, making its database the best available comparative representation of what is going on in the business in these cities.

For starters, forget the idea that Londoners are homebodies while New Yorkers are restaurant-goers without equal. In both towns the average respondent dines out 3.2 times per week (veritable stay-at-homes compared to Texans, Chicagoans and Los Angelesers, the latter probably unaware of what they are served, so long as they are seated at a prestigious table).

Forget, too, an outdated notion you may have that New Yorkers are out on the town primarily to entertain business buyers and clients, while Londoners leave their work at the office.

According to Zagat, only 26 per cent of the almost three million

meals its respondents ordered in New York's restaurants were for business purposes, while 34 per cent of more than 280,000 meals recorded in the London survey were for business rather than merely in pursuit of a pleasurable day or evening on the town.

London's new claim to top rank is based on two basic facts. First, its restaurant scene is dominated by younger men and women: 57 per cent of its inveterate dining-out set is under the age of 40, compared with 47 per cent in New York. This is supposed to give London's chefs greater latitude to experiment with a variety of new and foreign dishes. As a result, "nowhere beats London for sheer diversity of cuisine", say Zagat's London editors.

Second, the booming restaurant scene has encouraged the opening of a spate of new establishments, providing London with a rapidly increasing choice of dining spots. For a while, gigantic emporia such as Quaglin's and L'Odéon were all the rage.

But Zagat notes that "Londoners are beginning to tire of their novelty value", and to prefer "more intimate newcomers" such as L'Oranger and Maison Novelli, leaving the mega-restaurants to tourists and weekenders.

Of course, and this the media frenzy over swinging London fails to mention, many of the new restaurants are copycat versions of successful New York operations. Thus, Londoners' infatuation with Thai cooking is attributable in good part to the opening here of New York's Vong, and a craze for Japanese cuisine is expected to follow the spring opening here of Nobu, of New York fame. And Harrods has opened a deli featuring latkes and pastrami on rye. Not exactly a British innovation.

That propensity to imitate is not the only reason London has a long way to go before being in a class with New York as a Mecca for fine dining. Not only do old-established spots such as The Four Seasons ("The classiest, most elegant expression of New York") and "21" ("Still the quintessential 'men's club'") continue to draw raves from their adherents, but new joints open at the rate of one per week. This year some 265 new restaurants



Not only do established spots in New York continue to draw rave reviews, but new places open at the rate of one a day. This year about 265 restaurants opened

opened in New York. And — an important advantage over London — most of these new places are affordable.

The average bill in New York's restaurants this year came to a bit more than \$29 (£18) per head; in London you can expect to shell out \$41 on average. In the more expensive restaurants, New Yorkers also get a relative bargain: they pay an average of \$65, whereas Londoners face a bill of \$88. For the New York bargain-hunter there is still better news. In the 20 establish-

ments classified by Zagat as the "best-value restaurants", the average cost per meal is a mere \$9.79, down from \$12.60 in 1992. The penny-wise Londoner, by contrast, forks out twice as much, \$19.95, in the average "best-value" dining spot.

Susan Kessler, a cookbook author and Zagat co-ordinator who flits back and forth between the restaurant scenes in New York and London, says that New Yorkers who want to go around the corner for great grilled chicken "and leave

with their wallets intact have a huge advantage over their London counterparts, where good mid-priced restaurants are thin on the ground. And where good service is even harder to come by.

New Yorkers like to think of themselves as abused customers, saved by their own toughness from destruction by haughty maitres d', who often have trouble finding a place for newcomers even when faced with a blinding sea of white tablecloths.

That may be true in some places,

but poor service is a far more common phenomenon in London, where restaurateurs are reluctant to spend money on training their staffs, many of whom come from Italy, where casualness has a meaning all its own.

This disregard for diners is encouraged by the distinctly un-New York practice, preferred by a majority of London diners, of adding a fixed percentage to every bill to cover tips, reducing both the prospect of a penalty for surliness and of any reward for courtesy.

So by any test — variety, price or service — New York beats London hands down. The restaurant industry in that city remains the world's leader. London, although still a distant second, is, however, catching up in the diversity of its offerings.

"The industry here is in its teething stage," says Mrs Kessler. A bit better service, an occasional welcoming smile from the maitre d', and reasonable prices might just enable it to mature into a rival to New York.

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Ineptitude, duplicity and plot

Magnus Linklater expects more bad behaviour in the Commons

Over the next few weeks we had better get used to the prospect of MPs behaving badly. Monday's evidence of deceit and double-dealing over pairing arrangements in the recesses of the House of Commons may be just an early skirmish in the battle for survival that will mark the run-up to the general election. Genuinely rules will be cast aside as the whips on both sides play out their sinister role as counter-intelligence agents in a war where no one can be trusted and everyone is a potential enemy. Nothing brings out the feral instinct in our representatives more than the experience of minority government and the danger of sudden defeat.

I doubt if we should be too shocked. Yesterday I listened to John Prescott's fulminations about Tory malpractice, and feared he was heading for a seizure, so massive was his indignation. Yet what happened smacked more of ineptitude than of duplicity. The Government was always going to win Monday's vote, given the abjection of the Ulster Unionists, so double-pairing was not only foolish and counterproductive, it was unnecessary. The subterfuge was bound to be discovered, and the outcome simply means that all future pairing arrangements will be cancelled, to everybody's inconvenience. The most that can be read into the affair is the evidence it offers of incompetence in the Tory Whips' Office. Following the resignation of David Willetts, this implies little confidence in the way the party conducts its parliamentary business. As for Labour's behaviour, I'm not sure it was much better. There is evidence that pairing deals were being cancelled at the last minute, to the amazement of some Tories who thought they had the evening off. That is not how the system was meant to work.

At the same time, the outrage expressed by Labour MPs in Scotland over the way Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, commanded an RAF plane to get him down from Inverness for the vote (he was "on ministerial duty") is the official explanation seems somewhat concocted — a debating point rather than a serious question of principle. Should a minister on a government trip pay for his return journey if he is called back to vote? At what stage does he become a party man rather than a representative of the State? How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

These charges are evidence of frayed nerves rather than the corruption of power that Mr Prescott hinted at. And they are nothing new. Lloyd George, describing how Liberal MPs were tramping through the lobbies at all hours to keep Ramsay MacDonald in Downing Street, inveighed against the Government's unprincipled tactics. "While Liberal members are voting for the Labour Government," he complained, "Labour candidates have been put up against them throughout

the constituencies, and Liberalism is being hunted, if possible, to death... When we support them, our support is received with sullen indifference. If we dare to criticise them, we are visited with a peevish resentment."

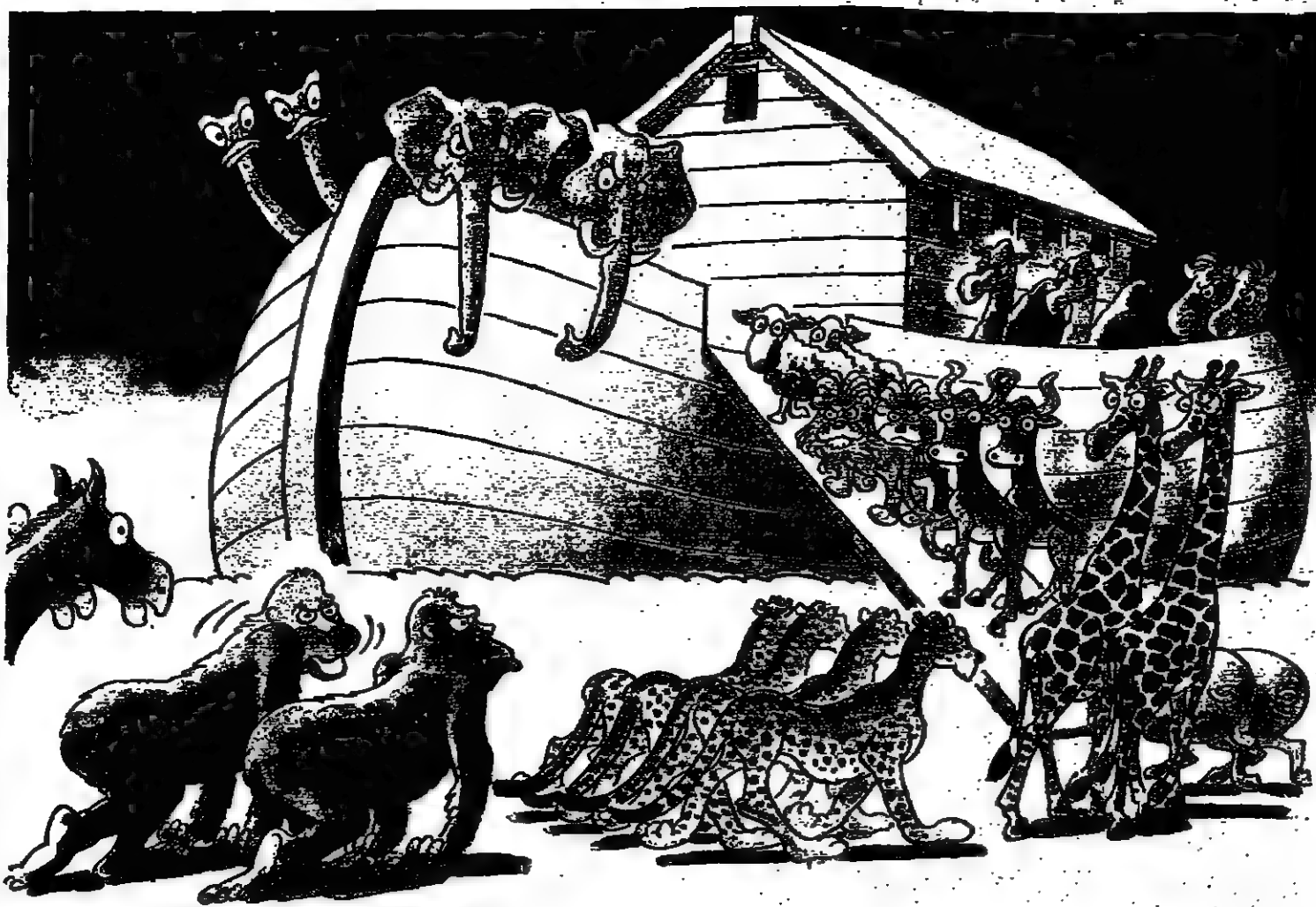
Who now remembers the fury directed against those two rebel Labour MPs, Desmond Donnelly and Woodrow Wyatt, in 1965 when they refused to be dragged into supporting the Government's Bill to renationalise steel? Tempers flare, and men do strange things when a single vote is at stake. It was suspicion of a former breach of pairing etiquette that prompted Michael Heseltine, now so gravely commenting on these matters, to raise the Commons mace above his head during a debate on the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Bill in 1976, so threatening the innocent white hairs of Michael Foot with fearsome damage. What goaded Mr Heseltine into frenzy was the rumour that a Labour MP, Tom Pendry, had broken his pairing arrangement at the instigation of the Government's Chief Whip. It turned out not to be true, but in that instant, Mr Heseltine's Tarzan image was formed. Sir

Julian Critchley, who was sitting behind him, remembers that it was the mild-mannered Jim (now Lord) Prior who lent forward and gently replaced the mace — the wrong way round.

There is, of course, a line to be drawn between cheating and arm-twisting, whatever form the latter may take. Sir David Steel, whose Liberal contingent helped maintain James Callaghan's Government in power for two years from the spring of 1977, would argue that the whips were entirely justified in keeping an independent Irish MP well supplied with Guinness in Annie's Bar so that he would cast his vote the right way in the final vote of confidence that brought down the Government.

Less acceptable is the absurd business of forcing sick MPs into the House rather than allowing them to be paired. Sir Julian, who now, alas, needs a wheelchair to move about, remembers sitting in the Commons car park behind the late Jo Richardson MP, who was actually wired up to a piece of medical equipment. She died shortly afterwards. He views with dismay the prospect of being called out to vote this winter on a three-line whip because of "the cruelty of the pairing system."

But it would be hard to argue that any of this seriously undermines the process of government. It is part of the sideshow of politics, mere entertainment for the rest of us. And it will give our MPs something to keep them busy in the dying days of an administration. Would we really swap it for what the Scottish Whig Sir James Mackintosh called "the wise and masterly inactivity" that was once the principal characteristic of a somnolent Commons?



"Tory cheetahs!"

Peter Brooke

Notes on Europe's past

If Shakespeare and Mozart are not correct enough for the euro, who is?

I keep a small bundle of foreign banknotes in an old wallet. In theory I dip into them when I visit their country of origin; in practice they stay for years at a time in the drawer of my bedside table.

My German notes are relatively up to date; they were issued in Frankfurt on August 1, 1991, so presumably they are still legal tender. They do however make me feel ashamed of my ignorance of German cultural history. The 100 DM note has a portrait of Clara Schumann, 1819-96. I know that I once read an article, or perhaps a programme note, about her. I take it that she was married to the composer, and started life as Clara something else, but I am not even sure of that. I have a strong feeling that she was herself a musician, a singer perhaps or a pianist. I have a less strong suspicion that she was at some point, apart from being Schumann's wife, if that is correct, some other composer's mistress, perhaps Liszt's. I may be labelling the memory of a chaste wife and mother. As she was famous enough to appear on the front of a high denomination note, I plainly ought to know more about her.

In fact, the Bundesbank, as always the best and wisest of central banks, gives a clue. On the back of the note there is a splendid 19th-century grand piano, though on strangely wobbly legs, together with five tuning forks. The hypothesis that Clara Schumann was a famous pianist must surely be correct. If I am inexorably ignorant of her, I am even more ignorant of Bathasar Neumann 1687-1753 (50 DM). To judge by the clues on the back of that note, he was Germany's Christopher Wren, and designed a church somewhere — but where? — which looked like a cross between St Paul's Cathedral and the Brighton Pavilion. Of course all my readers, being people of broad European culture, know perfectly well who he was. I did not.

I was absolutely stumped by Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (20 DM), 1797-1848. She was a writer; both a quill pen and a book appear on the back of her note. She must have been a romantic; her hairstyle is what one might call Hollywood Regency, and her collar has more than a hint of Van Dyck. Was she someone's mistress? If so, he may have had a hard time of it. The Bundesbank portrait makes her look intense, bossy and soulful, a dangerous combination at any period of history.

I feel that I am doing disgracefully

badly, with one faint recollection and two absolute misses. I come into my own only with the 10 DM note, and the agreeable, if somewhat gnomelike, features of Carl Friedrich Gauss, 1777-1855. I ought in principle to be better placed with German pianists, architects and writers than with mathematicians, but Gauss fascinates me, not so much for his mathematics, which I do not understand, but for being an infant prodigy who became an adult prodigy. He is well worth his place on a banknote.

I even know, or once knew, what a "Gauss" is. It is "the unit of intensity

of a magnetic field, whose measurement is the product of a Weber at the distance of one centimetre". As I have not the least idea what a Weber is, that definition is of little use to me, but you may take it as correct because I looked it up in 1989 and am now repeating what I then wrote. As an infant prodigy, Gauss taught himself to calculate before he could talk. At the age of three he corrected an error in his father's wage calculations. When he entered the Brunswick Collegium Carolinum at the age of 15, he had already independently discovered Bode's law of planetary distances, the binomial theorem and the arithmetic-geometric mean.

Gauss made a comment on one of his seven proofs of the law of quadratic reciprocity which illuminates the non-scientist the aesthetic element in scientific discovery. "It is characteristic of higher arithmetic that many of its most beautiful theorems can be discovered by induction with the greatest of ease, but have proofs that lie anywhere but near at hand... It is just the insight into the wonderful concatenation of truth in higher arithmetic that is the chief attraction for study and often leads to the discovery of new truths."

I am sure the Bundesbank must have put Goethe and Bach on notes of some denomination at some time. I suppose that Luther, who was the real maker of Germany, would not have wished, as a man of religion, to have his face printed on paper money. The difficulty of choosing such heroes is so great that the committee which designed the euro notes decided not to have portraits at all, but stock with architectural drawings — and even these are of non-existent buildings.

The euro committee's first difficulty was that there are more EU countries than denominations of euro notes: 15 countries and only seven denominations. If there had been more denominations, one could have had Hans Christian Andersen for Denmark, Sibelius for Finland and Tintin for Belgium without causing offence to anyone else. If there were still only seven countries, as there once were, they could simply have chosen the greatest cultural figures for each country, Goethe for Germany, perhaps Voltaire for France — he is, after all, the most quintessentially French of all Frenchmen — Shakespeare for Britain, Dante, Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo for Italy, and suitable local members of the historic European cultural establishment for Belgium and Luxembourg. Mozart would have been out, as Austria was not then a member of the EEC.

It would never have been possible to choose political portraits. The political makers of Europe were a murderous bunch of thugs. Time has dimmed the horrors of the Norman Conquest, but William the Conqueror would not have been chosen for Anglo-Saxon banknotes. Julius Caesar massacred Gauls by the hundred thousand as part of his mission to spread Roman civilisation; Charlemagne killed his sons of thousands; Napoleon and Hitler killed by the million, though Napoleon did so in a purely professional and soldierly way. Even Winston Churchill would have been Dresdened against him.

Among the artists and scientists, one could not easily apply Croux's test of "best of breed", only because Britain would win too many prizes. Greatest European dramatist, Shakespeare; greatest scientist, Newton; greatest biologist, Darwin; greatest economist, Gibbon; greatest econo-

mist, Smith; greatest biographer, Boswell; greatest woman writer, Austen. Britain would have no serious contenders in music or painting — Turner is not perceived as being on the level of Michelangelo. But we would have shortlisted candidates for greatest philosopher, novelist and romantic poet, at least in the modern world. In the ancient world it would be the Greeks first and the rest nowhere.

It was not however these considerations which were decisive. Despite the gallant feminism of the Bundesbank, there would have been many more heroes than heroines, and these heroes would by definition have been Dweens — Dead White European Males. Any Dween is, on the face of it, politically incorrect, yet the main cultural icons of Europe are unavoidably European and white, are likely to be dead before they can safely be identified, and are made in the large majority. My own guess is that the aggressive energy of excess testosterone makes men both more likely to murder people and to create cultural masterpieces, but that itself is a politically incorrect hypothesis.

We know from an interview given by the Italian banker Dr Guido Carpanzano to the *Corriere della Sera*, the Milan newspaper, that the design committee was driven by political correctness. Shakespeare was blackballed, not just because he is a Dween, but because the committee thought *The Merchant of Venice* anti-Semitic. Even more absurdly, Mozart went out because he wrote music for masses. Leonardo da Vinci was rejected on the grounds of his homosexuality, though freedom of lifestyle is usually part of political correctness.

There have certainly been ideologies much wickered and more dangerous than the authoritarian feminist liberalism of political correctness. We would all rather live under per rule than that of the Nazis, the Communists or any other aggressive totalitarian party. But silliness matters too. A correctness that rejects Mozart as unsuitable for a banknote because he wrote *The Magic Flute* goes too far. Perhaps the euro ought to have only one portrait on all denominations, that of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff herself. She may have been a wonderful German writer, but she looks the perfect symbol of the priggish interventionism that is taking over European culture and has already taken over American.

Revenge of the Incas

Matthew Parris
on Peru's apartheid
and Indian terror

The ferocity and grotesqueness of Peruvian terrorism are legendary in South America: so much so that it becomes difficult to separate fact from fiction. More notorious than Tupac Amaru, until now, has been the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), with its weird amalgam of peasant grievances and Maoist ideology. Now Sendero, one of the last communist revolutionary movements in the world, will become muddled, in Western minds, with Tupac Amaru, whose aims and structure are even more obscure.

Legend abounds. It is widely believed in South America that one of Sendero's methods has included stuffing live chickens with explosive and sending them into markets, to be detonated by a timing device. In one fanciful version, a child was used as a human bomb, sent into the lobby of the Lima Hilton.

It is certainly true that the terrorists' methods have been cruel — deprived of ammunition, they have sent villagers to death with rocks — but the overwhelming majority of their victims have been the rural peasantry and the security forces. Foreigners and tourists have only occasionally been the target. The terrorists' first aim has been to win over villages and regions to their cause. Communities loyal to the Government were "punished", sometimes en bloc. Government forces used to respond by "punishing" communities that sheltered the terrorists. As so often in South America, the little people have suffered at the hands of both sides. These are the descendants of the Inca Empire, which Spain utterly humiliated from the 16th century on. Some Latin Peruvians, and Indians too, see such movements as Sendero and Tupac Amaru as the Incas' revenge.

President Alberto Fujimori's Government has had considerable apparent success against the Sendero, whose leader has been captured and imprisoned. At some cost to the fragile welfare on which the poorest have relied, the Peruvian economy has been stabilised and invigorated. Tourists have been returning to Machu-Picchu and Cuzco. The province of Ayacucho, at one time almost a no-go area for government forces, has been returning to normal.

Nicholas Shakespeare, the son of a former British Ambassador in Lima, travelled in Ayacucho at its lowest ebb, and wrote extensively on Peruvian Indian terrorism. Tall and fair, he found himself feared as a suspected *Pistaco*, an alien spirit of whom the more remote Indian people live in mortal terror. According to folklore, *Pistacos* come from another world. To survive and breed they require a special pill which can only be derived from the crushed bodies of Indian people, which they come to the Andes to obtain. Shakespeare speculates that the roots of this folk wisdom may lie in some terrible tangle between native lore and stories about the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, followed by mineral prospectors and speculators, in whose mines millions of Indians died.

From my own travels in Peru I have the strongest hunch that the problems are not ideological but ethnic. The ethnic divide in the nation that straddles the ridges from Ecuador to Chile is one of the best-kept secrets in modern history. Because the inferior status of the South American Indians has never required the backing of law, nobody speaks of apartheid. The mistake the South African whites made was to write it down. The ruling class in Peru are whites too, but we forget that they are not the only inhabitants.

Only Latin South Americans can afford to visit Europe in any number, and it is their culture we tend to see when we fly in to the major cities and towns of the Andes and Pacific coast. The millions of Indian Peruvian, Ecuadorian and Bolivian citizens are almost invisible to international view. Their economic status is inferior, and in Lima you will see almost no full-blooded Indians in any but subservient occupations — or unemployed and encamped, ankle-deep in urine and litter, in the graffiti-daubed waste of corrugated iron and makeshift houses spreading out around the old city. In the countryside, almost everyone is of Indian blood.

Unlike the Red Indians in North America or the Aborigines in Australia, the descendants of the Inca Empire may have been subjugated, but they have not been marginalised, and their culture has lost none of its vigour. Recent Peruvian Governments have made some attempt to emancipate and involve them, but the task is huge.

Agriculture, on which most of these campesinos rely, has not kept up with industrial and commercial Peru. Neither the Sendero nor Tupac Amaru has ever enjoyed mass support among the campesinos — that must be emphasised — but like the IRA in apparently peace-loving Catholic Ireland, they are able to find shelter.

As a young Indian once told me, nobody likes the Government in Lima. Nobody supports the terrorists either. But some people "understand" them. Nobody in Peru will be supporting Tupac Amaru. But, up in the Andes and down in the slums of Lima, there will be some who understand.

Carte noire

HEAVY PADDING is in order for Lord Gowrie today, as he appears before Parliament's equivalent of the parish fête committee: its Gilbert and Sullivan fans. They are livid with him for what they suspect to be his and the Arts Council's condescending attitude towards giving grants to Britain's G&S companies, most notably the D'Oyly Carte, which is desperately short of cash.

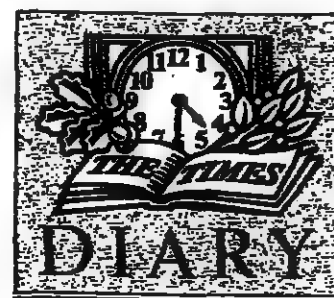
Iain Sproat, the spreading Minister of State at the heritage department, has ordered Gowrie in for a pasting at the bidding of an ad hoc Commons group of Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiasts, including former Tory chairman Sir Norman Fowler, former Home Secretary Kenneth Baker, the Dames Knight and Fookes, and Peter Brooke, MP for Westminster. In between flicking pellets at Gowrie's lah-di-dah tastes, their aim is to secure the cultural credibility of G&S.

Anthony Steen, the MP for South Hams and leader of the group, says of Gowrie's mob: "I suspect the plain truth is that the Arts Council doesn't really approve of such frivolity and would rather we saw Wagner and left grimly contemplating the 12-tone scale."

Sir Michael Bishop, chairman of the D'Oyly Carte is optimistic: "I think it will be what diplomats call a 'full and frank discussion'."

Jungle drums

LABOUR'S determination to keep the shutters down around its shadowy Audience Participation Unit, extends even to the families of its key members. Take Phil Royal, candidates' liaison officer, and the



man behind the fax exhorting Labour Party members to vote for Tony Blair in Radio 4's personality of the year poll. His son Marc is a leading jungle musician.

For the uninitiated, jungle is an increasingly popular form of fast menacing dance music. Young Royal goes by the stage name of T-Power, has released two albums, and is probably best known for his track "Police State". Royal Sr has gone to ground since the weekend's fiasco, and calls to him about his son's musical career are angrily dismissed by Labour. T-Power's media deflections, however, need more work. A male South London voice answered his telephone. I asked for Royal. "Yeah, I'll just get him. Who's asking?" "The Times." "Oh, there's no one by the name of Royal here. No, no one I can think of by that name."

T-Power's record company was more decisively evasive. "T-Power's father doesn't work for Labour," they tell me. "His father is dead."

No fun

SENATOR Ted Kennedy's depressing slide into pensionable sobriety continues with news of a very tame performance at his office Christmas party. There were no blue jokes, he and his wife Vicki turned up as Dalmatians and left early.

In previous years, the senator's office parties were raucous, pants-down affairs. He would show up in costumes ranging from Elvis to



All too steady, Teddy

George Bush, complete with White House dog Willie. The best, however, was when he came dressed as Barney the dinosaur and insisted on being addressed as "Tyranosaurus Rex".

Love lost

PARTY HELL down at the Banqueting House in Whitehall on Tuesday evening, as Diana, Princess of Wales, and Anna Pasternak, author of the heavy-breathed *Princess in Love*, passed each other at the entrance to the *Sunday Times* Christmas party.

To attend the *Sunday Times* do, Diana had dismissed the birthday party for Dominic Lawson, Editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, whose wife Rosa Monckton is a friend of hers. But as she left, she must have wished she hadn't. She found herself facing Pasternak, who takes up the story in her own gamey style: "I was coming in and she was leaving. We had very penetrating eye contact. This wasn't the first time I'd seen her though. We were once in neighbouring basins at Daniel Galvin's hairdressers. She didn't know I but I had the proof of Princess in Love in the bag at my feet."

● A broken leg affected Darcy Russell's performance of Cinderella



Russell: graceful

la at the Royal Opera House on Tuesday. Just as she placed her foot on a low stool to try on Prince Charming's glass slipper, one of its legs snapped. Jeremy Isaacs, general director of the Opera House, frowned from his seat. Gallantly the prince slipped his hand underneath to steady the stool, and Russell was shod.

P.H.S



GOLDEN ECONOMY

The best Tory message: don't let Labour destroy it

If only politics were as predictable as economics. Nobody who has been closely following developments in the British economy in the past few years should have been surprised by yesterday's vintage crop of statistics on jobs, wages and retail sales. Yet the Government, which has long counted on prosperity and economic confidence to save it from electoral perdition, is plunging new depths of unpopularity. Why?

First, there is the possibility that people do not yet feel the prosperity which the figures increasingly reveal, or alternatively that voters believe the recovery is somehow unsound or unsustainable. Pollsters find many people saying that Britain is still in recession. Wait just a few more months, say the optimists, and rising incomes will percolate into people's pockets; the political landscape will then be transformed.

The flaw in this argument is that people are already starting to believe that this recovery is real. Consumer confidence is back towards the levels last seen in the prosperous late 1980s. House prices and, more importantly, housing transactions are rising. Unemployment is dropping in voters' perceptions of the most critical issues facing the country. Why should voters react any differently to good economic news in the next four months?

The rise in consumer confidence has been matched by improvements in business and financial confidence — so much so that the biggest economic problem facing the Treasury and the Bank of England at present is the excessive strength of the pound. There are always good reasons to worry about economic recovery being blown off course by inflation, low investment or trade imbalances. At present, however, there is less reason for such concern than usual, partly because of the structural transformation of the British economy during the Thatcher years. This is not just the view of the business community. The improvement in Britain's economic structure is admitted even by many politicians on the centre Left.

Another possible explanation for the gap between politics and economics is the Government's failure to take credit for managing the economy in a reasonably competent way. John Major became Chancellor as a deep recession was starting and he made matters much worse by joining the ERM. His image has been identified with the hair shirt ever since. In the four years of steady recovery that have followed Britain's exit from the ERM, Mr Major could have wrought for himself and his Government a new, more optimistic image, better suited for a period of economic growth. He failed to do this, partly because of the distracting disunity in his party and partly perhaps because it took him so long to recognise the collapse of his policies on Black Wednesday as a deliverance not a disaster. It is still hard, however, to believe that, after four years, the debacle of Black Wednesday remains dominant in voters' minds.

What, then, is left to console Mr Major and the Tories? Only perhaps the great bugbear of ruling politicians through the ages. When a disaster strikes the country, people are inclined to blame the Government. But once a great issue begins to seem less troubling, the people do not thank the Government. Instead the issue, in this case unemployment, simply begins to slip from voters' minds. This is one reason why Churchill lost the postwar election and perhaps why Labour Governments have usually been elected during periods of optimism and prosperity rather than in the depth of economic slumps. To win the election, it will not be enough for the Tories to say that Britain is doing well and that Mr Major deserves at least some of the credit. They will also have to persuade the public that prosperity is too precious and fragile to allow it to be put into Labour's untried hands. In this sense at least, the Tories will inevitably and understandably be drawn into a negative campaign, designed to spread fear about the economic horrors Labour might perpetrate.

ANNAN OF THE UN

After a risible selection process, a rising agenda

Following a squalid set of political machinations, the United Nations finally has a new Secretary-General. Kofi Annan. First, Boutros Boutros Ghali reneged on his pledge to serve only five years in office and had to be removed by an 'African' veto. Then Washington, and the other four permanent members of the Security Council, accepted the absurd argument that his successor could only be an African. Finally, Jacques Chirac threw in a French language proficiency test for good measure. It is a marvel that any candidate emerged at all.

Allowing for the extraordinarily small pool of talent from which the UN permitted itself to pick, Mr Annan is a respectable if uninspiring choice. As Under Secretary-General for peacekeeping operations he has acquired a reputation for quiet competence. In a relaxed press conference yesterday he made clear that he wanted to do more than his predecessor to streamline bureaucracy and win the confidence of member states. He already has the confidence of the United States. A more dynamic figure such as Sadako Ogata, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, would have been welcome; but it seems that capacity to excel in this post never entered the job specification. In the future such a farce would be less likely if the Secretary-General served just one, non-renewable seven-year term.

Mr Annan faces a vast agenda. His first task is to prevent the UN's already chronic financial position slipping into outright bankruptcy. In the very short term this means clearing the backlog of dues, over \$2 billion strong, owed by members. More than half of this total involves the United States. Beyond that, an entirely new system of subscriptions that recognises the present

economic circumstances of the participants involved, must be finalised. In practice this means a sharp reduction in the proportion contributed by Washington and an appropriate increase from Asia, especially Japan. The US Congress has made repayment of its own debt contingent on a comprehensive overhaul of the bloated bureaucracy and petty corruption that has long been associated with the UN. This is a crucial objective. But Mr Annan's role must be far more than downsize-in-chief on behalf of Washington. Fundamental questions about the purpose of the United Nations in the aftermath of the Cold War exist but have not been addressed. That failure is at the core of the UN's troubles.

There has been an explosion in demands on peacekeeping. In 1988 the cost of such deployments was \$230 million and some 80 per cent of that expenditure went on policing disputes between states. By 1995 some \$3 billion was spent and over 80 per cent was concentrated on internal conflicts within states. These included an increasing number of cases — such as the shambles in Somalia — where the UN took over after the collapse of the country itself and in the absence of any meaningful national government.

That dramatic turnaround has placed unanticipated burdens on those providing troops. This has been the chief cause of friction between Washington and Mr Boutros Ghali. A further challenge lies in adapting an essentially diplomatic body to an international order increasingly dominated by economics. The result is a simmering dissatisfaction with the present structure. It falls to Mr Annan to take on the issues that his predecessors have left unresolved.

RED CROSS BUNGL

Food parcels are an inappropriate means of protest

During the Second World War, the Red Cross dispatched over 20 million food parcels to British and Commonwealth prisoners of war in Germany and Japan. For hundreds of thousands of men, these lifelines came to be the personification of the Red Cross; much of the current goodwill and support for this century-old organisation dates back to the debt of gratitude owed by so many to those who provided food and relief in those dark days.

Now the Red Cross is again distributing food parcels packed in Britain, but this time they are going to refugees and asylum-seekers, people in our own midst. There is a fierce domestic campaign underway against the Government's new asylum legislation. Many left-wing groups have chosen the proposed new regulations, under which social security funds can be denied to certain asylum seekers, as a focus for agitation. For the Red Cross, a scrupulously neutral humanitarian organisation, to allow itself to be linked to such a campaign in Britain is a mistake. Red Cross food parcels are an inefficient response: asylum-seekers are generally clustered in known centres and hostels. But, more importantly, they are an inappropriate response; it is damaging for the Red Cross to equate the refugees' condition with that of POWs and to allow the Government to be portrayed as a captor

holding people in hungry confinement against their will.

The Red Cross generally operates in areas of extreme difficulty and danger. Its brave workers and volunteers sometimes pay a heavy price. In Chechnya this week five women and one man were murdered in their beds by masked gunmen who broke into a house before dawn. The six, drawn from five different Western countries, had been helping to run a hospital ten miles from Grozny. Their senseless murder is proof that terrorists no longer respect neutrality nor humanitarian motives. Indeed, the very attempt to relieve suffering often makes targets of those attempting to do so.

Britain, and *The Times* in particular, has given strong support to the Red Cross, both in its routine but vital volunteer work here at home and in its relief, tracing and intercession activities abroad. The British branch of the Red Cross came into being largely as a result of an appeal launched in this newspaper. The sincerity of today's Red Cross is not in doubt. But its leaders should ask themselves whether their efforts should not better be directed at helping the refugees in the countries from which they fled. The Refugee Council can more appropriately solicit funds to support asylum-seekers, while political lobbies can take up the challenge to the Government's proposals.

Flaws in plan for bad drivers to pay

From Mr Michael Gould

Sir, Your report, "Drivers 'should pay bill for crash victims'" (December 12), explains how the Law Commission proposes that negligent drivers should be singled out to pay for their victims' treatment by the National Health Service.

The illogicality of this proposal is twofold. First, why should only the NHS be allowed to recoup costs incurred as a result of an accident? Why should not the fire services and police be allowed to charge for their involvement? Indeed, why should not other road users suffering delay and inconvenience be allowed to charge for their losses?

Second, why should motorists be singled out? No one intends to be negligent. The negligent motorist is no more blameworthy than the person who requires treatment after falling down his own stairs.

In my view the logical extension of the Law Commission's proposal is that the National Health Service be privatised. Such a policy may be perfectly acceptable to the present Government but would be a strange policy for the Law Commission to pursue.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL GOULD
(Senior Lecturer), Law School,
Staffordshire University,
Leak Road,
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire,
December 13.

From Mr John C. Banks

Sir, It is proposed that the NHS be able to claim an estimated £20 million per year in compensation from those who cause road traffic accidents, of which £20 million to £30 million would be swallowed up in costs of administering the system.

Of course the money would actually be recovered from the insurers and it is reasonable to assume that they would incur similar costs. These costs would, in turn, be recovered through increased premiums paid not only by the guilty but by all of us.

Thus the NHS would be enriched by about £100 million at a cost to the motorist of about £150 million, paid out of taxed income. By my estimation, this represents about £200 million of untaxed income.

As an alternative we could give the NHS the £100 million with no additional administration cost, financed out of general taxation, and therefore paid by all taxpayers out of their untaxed income. Nearly all motorists are taxpayers, and relatively few taxpayers are non-motorists.

The proposed scheme is an unbelievably inefficient way of funding the NHS, but a wonderful way of funding administrators and the legal profession.

Yours faithfully,
J. C. BANKS,
23 Dovecote Road,
West Bridgford, Nottingham,
December 12.

From Mrs Jane Hodges

Sir, As well as having drivers pay for the injuries sustained by road accident victims, what about making those suffering from self-inflicted ones pay too? I would include among these smokers and abusers of drugs or alcohol.

Yours faithfully,
JANE HODGES,
18 Gloucester Road,
Walsall, West Midlands,
December 14.

From Mr John Lomas

Sir, You carried the report about transferring the cost of traffic accident injuries from the NHS to the insurers on the same day as a report on the major traffic jam caused in London by a lorry colliding with a gantry at the entrance to the Blackwall Tunnel.

Is there not a case for the haulage companies to pay for delays caused by this sort of incident?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN LOMAS,
Spratton House, Chapel Lane,
Newborough, Staffordshire,
December 13.

Straw poll

From Mr Charles Bowerman

Sir, I was intrigued to read Mr John Cryer's letter (December 11) on inconsiderate drivers of farm vehicles. I have just taken a tractor (with visible number plates) to our local dealer for a service. Naturally I pulled over whenever possible to let following traffic past, and was interested to note that of 44 vehicles only 16 drivers saw fit to acknowledge my action, represented thus: the one motorcycle; eight out of nine lorries; not one of the three white vans; and only seven of the 31 cars.

Is the ability to show common courtesy part of the HGV and motorcycle licence tests, or is it simply that many car and van drivers pay so little attention to other road users that they were simply unaware of my actions?

Yours faithfully,
C. H. BOWERMAN,
6 Swan Cottages, Pewsey, Wiltshire,
December 12.

With the postal delays that often occur at this time of year, it is useful, where possible, for letters to be faxed to 0177-782 5046. Please give contact telephone numbers.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

'Treachery' of the Duke of Windsor

From Mr Philip Ziegler

Sir, Mr Michael Ryan's letter of December 9 (see also articles, December 4, 10) accepting as established truth the wilder assertions of stray German functionaries, confirms his determination to put the blackest possible interpretation on anything the unfortunate Duke of Windsor said or did.

To take, for instance, the Duke's alleged betrayal of Allied battle plans to the Germans in the winter of 1940: this rests on the unsubstantiated gossip of Count Zech, German Minister to The Netherlands, who cited the Duke as the source of information about Allied troop movements in the event of a German invasion of Belgium. Zech gave no indication of how he came by this intelligence, nor to whom the Duke might have been talking.

The "information" which the Duke was supposed to have provided was in fact the direct opposite of what he must have known to have been the truth. From this one might deduce that the Duke was taking part in a cunning deception operation. More plausibly, one might dismiss the whole story as a mare's nest. I do not see how it can be read as proving that he was a traitor.

Nor did the Duke express "profound sentiments" to the American journalist, Fulton Oursler, he argued that Britain could not win the war and that a "Pax Americana" was the best hope for humanity. Though his attitude was defeatist and, as it turned out, misguided, it was not treasonable.

The new releases from the Public Record Office do not confirm in "extraordinary" or any other detail the allegations as to the Duke's treachery made in Mr Ryan's lamentable Channel 4 programmes. I am sorry to dis-

appoint him, but nor would the contents of the royal archives.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP ZIEGLER,
22 Cottesmore Gardens, W8,
December 9.

From Mr Tom Hawkins

Sir, If only the "vital role of *The Times*" in the Abdication affair had been directed to the earth-shattering events then taking place in Germany, you might well have had something to crow about ("Edward, Mrs Simpson and *The Times*", December 10).

What a pity Geoffrey Dawson did not use his "fluent and pitiless pen" to expose the growing threat of Hitler, and his preparations for war. Whilst happy to make a pompous meal of a comparatively trivial piece of our history, Dawson deliberately suppressed reports from Germany which might well have compelled Baldwin and the other appeasers to face facts.

The engine that drove the Abdication was on the wrong line.

Yours,
T. H. HAWKINS,
32 Virginia Beaches,
Virginia Water, Surrey.

From Mr John W. Heren

Sir, The proof of *The Times* leader of December 3, 1936, was delivered by me to No 10 Downing Street at 10.30pm on the previous evening. In my presence, Mr Stanley Baldwin penned some marginal comments and the proof was returned to Printing House Square by 11.15pm. The presses rolled at 11.45pm.

I delivered the proof by taxi.

Yours etc,
JOHN W. HEREN,
Rowan Garth, Saint Ives Road,
Somerham, Cambridgeshire.

Human rights court

From Lord Alexander of Weedon,
QC, Chairman of Justice

Sir, Your excellent leading article today on the Saunders judgment in the European Court of Human Rights prompts two further thoughts.

First, the judgment is a timely and salutary reminder that continental European institutions can often make a worthwhile civilising contribution to maintaining and enhancing our own national values.

Secondly, our citizens still have to take their claims under the European Convention to the Court in Strasbourg. Why? Because successive governments have persistently declined to incorporate the Convention directly into our own law. So our own judges are powerless to rule on it.

The time has surely at last come when we should patriate what is now *de facto* our most important constitutional document and trust our own judges to apply it.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT ALEXANDER,
Chairman of Council,
Justice,
59 Carter Lane, EC4,
December 18.

Countryside clutter

From Mr Anthony Steen, MP for
South Hams (Conservative)

Sir, The Council for the Protection of Rural England is right to suggest that a rising tide of clutter could kill the countryside (report, December 9), but we should not conclude from this that in order to preserve the countryside it needs to be kept as a museum piece.

The country is a dynamic organism which only prospers if people living and working there have the opportunity to thrive. In many rural areas, this Government's desire to deregulate signposting has already proved important for those enterprises off the beaten track, including tourist attractions whose survival depends upon

their whereabouts being known. In this way the innocuous little brown directional sign has already helped to create new job opportunities in areas such as Devon; but those in charge of county councils must balance the long-overdue liberalisation of restrictive tourist-sign policy with a sensitivity to what is clearly not acceptable.

The suggestion by Jonathan Dimbleby, the CPRE's president, that the accumulation of small changes will inevitably result in the suburbanisation of the countryside is, I believe, unfounded.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY STEEN,
House of Commons,
December 11.

Saving St Pancras

From Mr G. M. Wedd

Sir, I support the plea from the Victorian Society that the historic buildings at St Pancras Station be given the maximum statutory protection (letter, December 6; see also letters, November 29, December 3).

After many years in the doldrums, the buildings of the Gothic Revival are now valued as they should be, and I do not suppose that the magnificent Scott front of St Pancras is under any immediate threat. But public taste is fickle, and one can easily foresee a time when people are pointing out, quite correctly, that buildings like this are not economical to run and, being old, are expensive to maintain and repair;

and that the building provides only a fraction of the lettable floor space that would be provided by a modern office block, rising no higher than Scott's pinnacles.

When that time comes, every layer of protection will be necessary. One only has to think of the Gothic Revival buildings we lost last time fashion turned against them.

The eastern range of the new British Library building has a roof-line deliberately lowered to afford a view of St Pancras from the library courtyard. It would be a pity if this ever offered only a view of a 20th office block.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE WEDD,
The Lodge, Church Hill,
High Littleton, Somerset.

Socks washed?

From Mrs Jackie Morrissey

Sir, Yesterday I very much enjoyed an infant school's Christmas production. My delight was compounded when, at the end, the Headmaster stood up to thank everyone and remarked that as the huge, beautifully consumed cast filled past, the dozen or so little shepherds had moved him to coin a new collective noun: a nativity of teatowels.

Yours faithfully,
JACKIE MORRISSEY,
2 Coddington Place, Clifton, Bristol,
December 13.

Cash crisis

From Mr Chris Olding

Sir, Mr R. D. Cohen (letter, December 13) is concerned that there is no key-board symbol for the new euro.

May I suggest (-) The open bracket would signify that we don't know where it will end and the equals sign, unresolved, that we don't know what it will be worth.

Yours faithfully,
C. J. OLDING,
Stonecroft, Ripton Hill,
North Ripton, Leeds, West Yorkshire,
December 13.

Painless surgery pioneers praised

From Professor T. E. J. Healy

Sir, President Yeltsin's recent and much publicised cardiac surgery would have been quite impossible, indeed a mere fantasy, had it not been for the unsung but very real skill and dedication of his anaesthetists. It now seems accepted that the anaesthetist, though the guardian of the patient's life, should be ignored and remain in obscurity.

One hundred and fifty years ago it was not so. On December 14, 1946, ether was used for the first time for anaesthesia in Britain — by Mr James Robinson in London for a dental extraction and by Dr William Scott in Dumfries for an amputation. Two days later, Robert Liston, a famous London surgeon, carried out an amputation of the leg above the knee; again, ether was used.

Much was still to be learnt before the skills of the anaesthetist would become, as it too often seems, so little esteemed. We need occasionally to remember the horror and desolation of conscious patients strapped to operating tables undergoing amputation of limbs or, perhaps, the ripping open of their abdomens as, in the case of women patients, for removal of ovaries. We can, I sense, hear even yet the screams of those who suffered, if we listen hard enough.

We live today in the expectation that surgery will be pain-free and that we may sleep safely and awaken protected by the anaesthetist. Let anaesthesia's 150th anniversary acclaim those who pioneered it and those who continue its advance. The wonders of surgery stand on the shoulders of anaesthesia.

Yours faithfully,
T. E. J. HEALY,
(President, Section of Anaesthesia,
The Royal Society of Medicine,
The University of Manchester,
Department of Anaesthesia,
Manchester Royal Infirmary,
Oxford Road, Manchester,
December 18.

Rackham and Ratty

From Mr Derek Hudson

Sir, Arthur Rackham's drawing of Rat and Mole which you reproduced to accompany your report (December 9) on the near extinction of the water-vole was the last drawing he ever made. He was very ill with cancer in 1939 and had great difficulty in completing his illustrations for *The Wind in the Willows*, which meant much to him.

Having finished the drawing with difficulty Rackham discovered there were no ears in the boat and, though his daughter tried to persuade him that it didn't matter, he insisted on putting them in. Then he lay back exhausted and said: "Thank goodness, that is the last one". And so it proved, in every sense.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK HUDSON,
7 Churchill Road, Guildford, Surrey.

Young as you feel

From Mr Donald Cross

Sir, Feeling reasonably spry until a few moments ago, I have just read about the tragic death of a 62-year-old man (News in brief, later editions, December 17). In June I celebrated my 71st birthday. It was a terrible shock, seeing your report, to realise that I have been "elderly" for little short of an entire decade.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD CROSS,
9 Furze Croft,
Furze Hill, Hove, East Sussex,
December 17.

Mind over matter

From Dr Jonathan Olney

Sir, It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of Dr Harold Edwards (Obituary, December 13).

He was an extremely popular Dean at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and superbly good at demonstrating clinical signs to a large student audience with exactly the right degree of showmanship that neurologists are supposed to have.

I will always remember the occasion when a student left his motorcycle in Dr Edwards's parking space, the only named space in the medical school garage. The Dean simply drove his Rolls-Royce motor car over the offending vehicle. This was widely accepted as the only possible course of action.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN OLNEY
(Consultant neurologist),
Old Mill House,
Cowfold Road, Balney, Sussex.

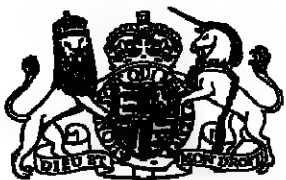
Head gear

From Mrs Nicolas Chisholm

Sir, My husband's Christmas present this year from his pupils was a yellow hard hat "for fortune".

Could this be a modern replacement for the mortar board and would Mrs Gillian Shephard approve?

Yours sincerely,
AURIOL CHISHOLM,
The Headmaster's House,
The Yehudi Menuhin School,
Stoke d'Abernon,
Cobham, Surrey,
December 16.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 18: The Duke of Edinburgh, Captain General Royal Marines, today attended a luncheon for past and present Colonels Commandant at Admiralty House, London SW1.

His Royal Highness, Fellow, the Royal Society, this afternoon chaired a meeting of the Project Science Board of Patrons at Buckingham Palace.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 18: The Duke of York, Colonel-in-Chief, The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's) this morning visited Battalion locations in the Closed Border Area, Hong Kong.

His Royal Highness this afternoon visited the Tsing Ma suspension bridge.

The Duke of York afterwards visited Chek Lap Kok airport.

His Royal Highness this evening visited the Headquarters of the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps.

The Duke of York later attended a Dinner given by

the Governor at Government House.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 18: The Prince of Wales, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Dragon Guards, this morning received Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Faulkner upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer and Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Cary upon assuming the appointment.

His Royal Highness, President, Business in the Community, afterwards received reports from business leaders who have taken part in the "Seeing is Believing" programme at St James's Palace.

The Prince of Wales this evening attended the Olympia International Showjumping Championships at Olympia, London SW5.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 18: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, President, The Friends of the Elderly, this afternoon attended the Society's Annual Service of Thanksgiving and Carols at St Michael's Church, Chester Square, London SW1.

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh, as Patron of the Ely Cathedral Trust Order of St Etheldreda, will attend a luncheon at the Deanery, Ely Cathedral, at 12.30.

Princess Margaret will attend a gala concert given by John Dankworth and Cleo Laine at the Stables Theatre, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, at 8.00 in aid of the refurbishment of the theatre.

Service luncheon

Royal Marines
The Duke of Edinburgh, Captain General Royal Marines, was present at a luncheon for Colonels Commandant Royal Marines held yesterday at Admiralty House, Major-General John Grey, Representative Colonel Commandant, presided.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, KG, Life Colonel Commandant, and Major-General David Pennefather, Commandant General, were among the guests.

Birthdays today

Sir Antony Buck, QC, former MP, 68; Mr Ross Buckland, chief executive, Unigate, 54; Mr Upamanyu Chatterjee, novelist, 37; Mr Timothy Eggar, MP, 45; Brigadier L.J. Harris, cartographer, 86; Sir Brian Hill, president, Higgs and Hill, 64; Mr Steven Isserlis, cellist, 38; Mr Syd Little, comedian, 54; Mr Tim Parks, novelist, 42; Major-General R. Bernard Penford, 80.

The Marquess of Queensberry, 70; Mr David Rowe-Beddoe, chairman, Welsh Development Agency, 59; Sir David Rowe-Ham, former Lord Mayor of London, 61; Professor Christopher Smout, Historiographer Royal in Scotland, 63; Lord Weir, 65.

Lieutenancy of Staffordshire

The Earl of Uchfield, of Shugborough, Stafford, has been appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Staffordshire.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr R.D. Beadon and Miss C.E. Houston
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of the late Major Dacres Beadon, and of Mrs Rachel Garrett, of London, and Claire, elder daughter of Mr William Houston, of Stavanger, Norway, and Mrs Susan Houston, of Uppingham, Rutland.

Mr D.H.G. Bennett and Miss J.S. Prince
The engagement is announced between David, elder son of Mr and Mrs Keith Bennett, of Aokland, New Zealand, Jennifer, younger daughter of Mr Michael Prince, of Osoth, Surrey, and the late Mrs Lord Prince.

Mr A. Cammeh and Miss L. Morgan
The engagement is announced between Andrew, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Bill Cammeh, of Crundale, Kent, and Louise, second daughter of Mr Christopher Morgan, of Saint Saturnin-le-Ape, Vaucluse, France, and Mrs Patsy Morgan, of Fulham, London.

Mr W.B. Gibbs and Miss A. Hurran
The engagement is announced between Will, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Gibbs, of Kensington, London, and Ashley, only daughter of Mr and Mrs John Hurran, of Solihull, Surrey.

Mr B.H. Gray and Miss H. Watford
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, only son of Mr and Mrs John Gray, of Barry, Scotland, and Helen, only child of Mr David Watford, of Ayr, Ayrshire, and Mrs Jane Watford-Salter, of Brussels, Belgium.

Mr J.M. Hobday and Miss J.C. Egar
The engagement is announced between Justin, elder son of Mr and Mrs Michael Hobday, of Kingston, Surrey, and Justine, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs William Egar, of Ackleton, Shropshire.

Mr E.H. Jenkins and Miss C.C. Hitchcox
The engagement is announced between Hugh, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Jenkins, of Sevenoaks, Kent, and Claudia, only daughter of the late Mr Duncan Hitchcox and of Mrs Claire Hitchcox, of Belchamp, Wiltshire, and Mrs Susan, of Salford, Suffolk.

Mr A.J.R. Johnston and Miss A.C. Kevins
The engagement is announced between Adrian, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Johnston, of Helmsborough, Northamptonshire, and Alison, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Kevins, of Bourville, Birmingham.

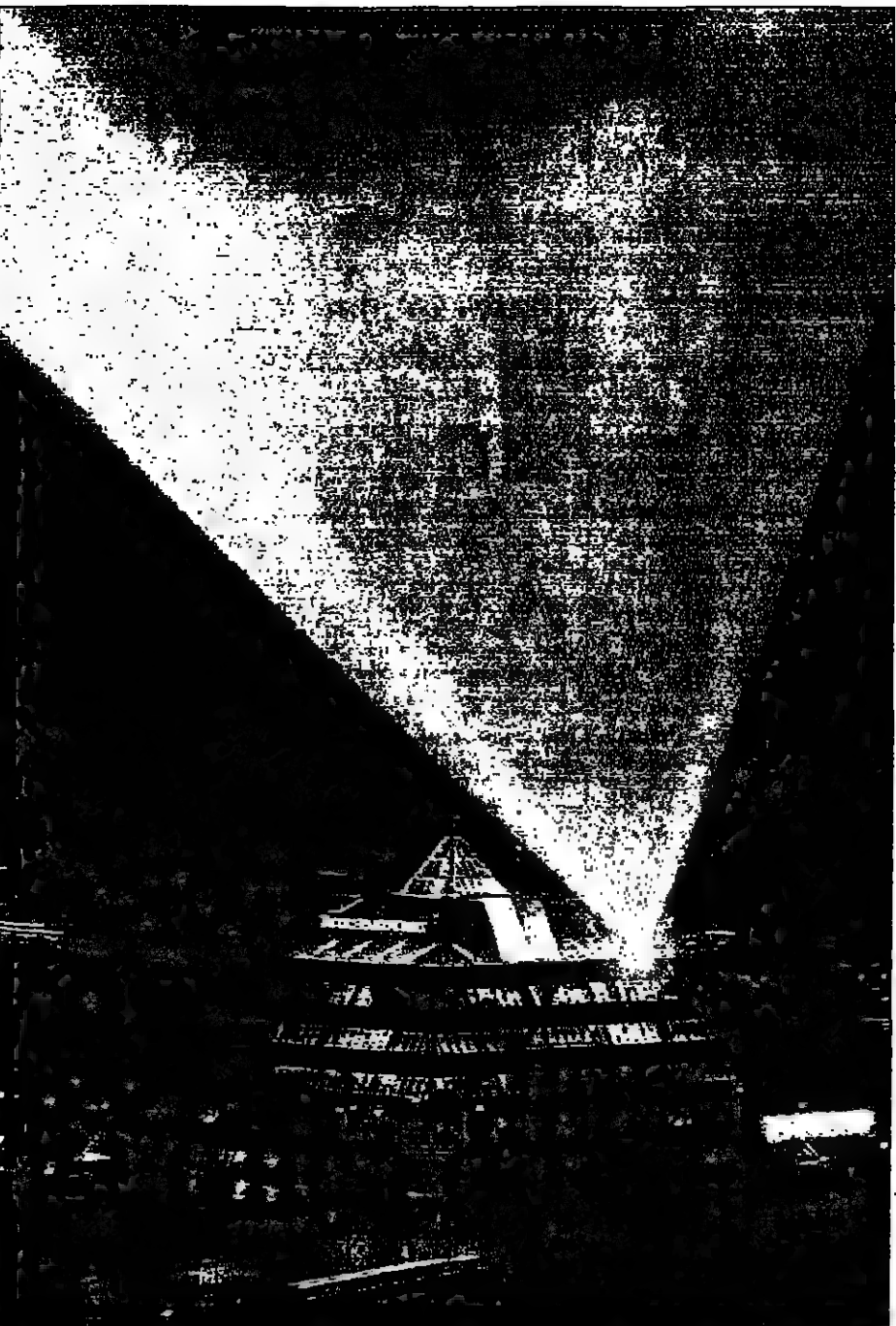
Mr C.E.T. Lewis and Miss M.A. Berg
The engagement is announced between Charlie, younger son of Mr Ian Lewis, of Fordingham, Kent, and Mrs Patsy Berg, of Helleham, East Sussex, and Michelle, elder daughter of Dr and Mrs Derek Berg, of Sydney, Australia.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: William Edward Parry, Arctic explorer, 1903; Sir Ralph Richardson, actor, Cheltenham, 1902; Leonid Brezhnev, President of the Soviet Union, 1907; Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, 1906; Edith Piaf, singer, Paris, 1915; Eamon Andrews, broadcaster, Dublin, 1922.

DEATHS: Vins Bering, navigator, Bering Island, 1741; Emily Brontë, poet and novelist, 1848; Joseph Mallord William Turner, painter, London, 1841; Sir Paul Vincent Smyth, astronomer, 1925; Henry II became King of England, 1154.

Britain and China signed an agreement for the return in 1997 of Hong Kong to China, 1984.



A powerful laser beam lights up the sky above Stockport to mark the opening of the Co-operative Bank's new Pyramid Building. The light, said to be the most powerful laser beam in Britain, is mounted on top of the 120ft high building and can be seen from 12 miles away. The bank's move to the new building has created nearly 200 jobs.

Service dinner

HMS Northwood
Lieutenant-Commander Trevor Wright presided at the annual ladies' night dinner of former officers of the HMS Northwood Training Department held last night at the Army and Navy Club.

Dinners
Royal Society of St George
The Lord Mayor, accompanied by the Sheriffs and their ladies, attended the Christmas dinner of the City of London branch of the Royal Society of St George held last night at the Mansion House.

Anniversaries
The Rev Norman Swainson, Rector, Jarrold Grange, to be Priest-in-charge Cockfield and Lynessack (Durham).

The Rev Ian Thurston, Parochus of the Parish, All Halows by the Tower, to be Vicar, Holy Trinity, Tottenham (London).

The Rev Barry Tomlinson, Rector, Great and Little Plumstead by Thorpe End and Withor, to be also Rural Dean of Blodfield (Norwich).

The Rev Keith Wilkinson, Headmaster of Kings School, Canterbury, to be also an Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral (Canterbury).

The Rev John Woods, Priest-in-charge (NSM), Birdslay Langton, to be Priest-in-charge (NSM), newly-created benefice of Settrington, North Grimsby, Birdslay Langton (York).

Resignations and retirements
The Venerable Ernest Stroud, Archdeacon of Colchester (Chelmsford), to retire April 30, 1997, and then to be appointed Archdeacon Emeritus.

Canon Cedric Bradbury, Rector, Great Massingham w Little Massingham and Harpley; Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral, and Priest-in-charge, Weasenham and Wellingham (Norwich); to retire January 31, 1997.

Canon Roy Arnold, Diocesan Communications Officer, Chaplain with Dear People, and an Honorary Canon of Sheffield Cathedral (Sheffield); to retire April 4, 1997.

Canon Peter Buslin, Vicar, Solihull School, Solihull (Birmingham); to retire July 31, 1997.

The Rev Michael Lippitt, Vicar, Holy Trinity, Jesmond (Newcastle); retired October 31.

The Rev David Tompkins, Vicar, Tockwith and Bilton w Bickerton (York); to retire April 30, 1997.

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Church news

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Deaths
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Memorial services

Lord Finberg

The Lord Chancellor was present at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Lord Finberg held yesterday at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St John's Wood.

Rabbi David Goldberg officiated. Mr Donald Leppman, cousin, read Psalm 90. Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Buchanan, Master of the Guild of Freemen, read the Proclamation of the Guild of Freemen of the City of London. The Lord Chancellor, Mr. Lord Finberg, was a member of the Guild of Freemen of the City of London.

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Those who could find anything made up their minds to leave, and he was sent the proud possession of about half the money on the island—namely, an English half-crown and a shilling; also several pairs of Tristan socks, for knitting which the island is famous, some coloured handkerchiefs, and a few other trifles, and several strange articles of headgear known as Tristan "cappies," worn by the children here. A metal teaspoon and a highly patterned egg-cup completed the collection. It was all made over to Captain Cattle's silver, to the baby and his mother.

NEWS

Embassy rebels threaten hostages

Guerrillas who took nearly 500 diplomats, politicians, business leaders and other top officials hostage at a glittering embassy reception in Lima threatened last night to start shooting their captives one by one.

The leftist rebels got in to the Japanese ambassador's residence disguised as waiters and let off explosives and fired automatic weapons. One of the 23 rebels was wounded and 170 of the captives were released. Pages 1, 13

Duke says gun clubs no worse than golf

The Duke of Edinburgh suggested that members of shooting clubs were no more dangerous than members of golf or squash clubs. He implied that the new legislation to ban certain handguns would be ineffective because it would not prevent weapons getting into the hands of criminals. Page 1

Paedophile register

Paedophiles and other sex offenders will have to register their addresses with the police for between five years and a lifetime under new plans. Page 1

Unemployment fall

The largest fall in unemployment since present records began took the number of jobless down to below two million for the first time in almost six years, boosting Government hopes of the economy strengthening. Page 1

Currency assurance

Kenneth Clarke will today almost certainly receive final Cabinet agreement that the Government's wait-and-see policy on the single currency cannot be changed before the General Election. Page 2

Imperfect murder

Russell Causley, a fraudster who claimed to have committed the perfect murder when he dissolved his wife's body in acid, was jailed for life. Page 3

Anti-abortion party

Mohamed al Fayed has promised substantial financial backing for a new anti-abortion party which hopes to field 50 candidates at the general election. Page 4

Hero remembered

A coroner paid tribute to a Battle of Britain fighter pilot and contrasted him with highly paid footballers and other false heroes of the 1990s. Page 5

Runaway Blair owns up

The best kept secret of Tony Blair's schooldays was revealed when he confessed on television that he sneaked on to a plane destined for the Bahamas at the age of 14 to escape the horrors of public school. Mr Blair said "the craziest thing" he had ever done happened after his parents put him on a train in Newcastle to return to Fettes School in Edinburgh. Page 1

London food parcels

The Red Cross is to distribute food parcels in Britain for the first time in nearly 50 years because immigration controls have reduced refugees to the levels of famine-stricken countries. Page 6

Rabies control

Vets warned against an early change to quarantine controls and called for more evidence that alternative safeguards would keep out rabies. Page 7

It's good to watch

A light entertainment show is to become the first British prime-time television programme to be paid for by an advertiser. Page 8

War crimes squad

A proposal to set up a special police squad to hunt down war criminals in the former Yugoslavia was approved by Nato defence ministers. Page 9

Islamic fear

French police have boosted security at stations, airports and public buildings amid fears that Islamic terrorists may launch further bomb attacks in Christmas week. Page 10

Clinton blow

Charles Tlie, an Asian conduit for suspect donations to the Clintons, brought further humiliation to the White House when it emerged that he had maintained close ties long after aides had questioned his probity. Page 11



The Duke of York, colonel-in-chief of the 1st Battalion, Staffordshire Regiment, with his men during a two-day visit to Hong Kong yesterday

BUSINESS

Electricity: Only two out of the original twelve regional companies will remain independent or without a bid after London Electricity yesterday agreed to be taken over by Entergy of New Orleans. Page 21

Jobless: The biggest monthly fall in unemployment since present records began took the seasonally adjusted number of jobless below 2 million for the first time in six years. Page 21

Building societies: The Woolwich Building Society Bill that was published yesterday. Page 21

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 38.6 to 4018.2. Sterling rose from 94.0 to 94.4 after a rise from \$1.6715 to \$1.6725 and from DM2.5841 to DM2.5999. Page 24

Cricket: Excellent bowling by Robert Croft kept England in contention on the opening day of the first Test against Zimbabwe, who reached 256 for six. Page 40

Selling: A second yacht in the BT Global Challenge has suffered a failure to her forestay, raising concerns that the fault may be replicated on other boats. Page 40

Equestrianism: Paul Darragh, of Ireland, made a rousing start to the Olympia Show when he and the eight-year-old, Scandal, won the Christmas Candle Stakes by 1.2sec. Page 37

Racing: Bellator, the ante-post favourite for the Triumph Hurdle at Cheltenham next March, has been ruled out for the season by a stress fracture of the leg. Page 35

New films: With frenetic action, an unrelenting soundtrack and no time to develop relationships between the characters, *Evita* is all lung and no heart. Page 29

New releases: On video, Eddie Murphy finds a darkly comic vehicle in Wes Craven's *Vampire in Brooklyn*; while on CD, Felicity Lott goes all French and frothy on a new recording of Offenbach. Page 30

Rival Nutcrackers: London is being treated to two rival versions of *The Nutcracker*, one by English National Ballet and the other by the Kirov from St Petersburg. Page 31

Solo singer: Galina Gorchakova gives an entirely Russian programme in her recital but the strain of fatigue is evident. Page 31

Growing back: Dr Thomas Stuttaford on the mystery of hair loss and how hair can return. Page 14

Mistletoe may contain medicinal benefits. Page 14

Top city: Which is the trendiest city and the best for dining out? New York or London? Irwin Stelzer rates restaurants in the two by variety, price, and service. Page 15

Reviews: Karen Armstrong on a history of Christianity; Philip Howard on the Penguin edition of *Euripides*; Roger Scruton on hunting; Jonathan Clark on the Prime Minister who lost America. Pages 32, 33

Double trouble: How one family faced losing their holiday because of double-booking by the hotel in their holiday resort — until *The Times* stepped in. Page 34

Coming after the law on the press which reduced to zero the cautious liberalisation of the last few years, that of political parties which aims to stifle all opposition and the new constitution which makes Islam the "religion of the state", the decision to bring Arabic into widespread use will accentuate the authoritarian character of the Algerian regime. It is certainly not the best way to fight fundamentalism. — *La Monde*

Joe Coral, bookmaker; Michael Saunders, Treasury Solicitor; Irving Caesar, lyricist. Page 19

Saunders; car crash costs; Duke of Windsor "treachery"; anaesthetics; bullying at work. Page 17

IN THE TIMES

POP

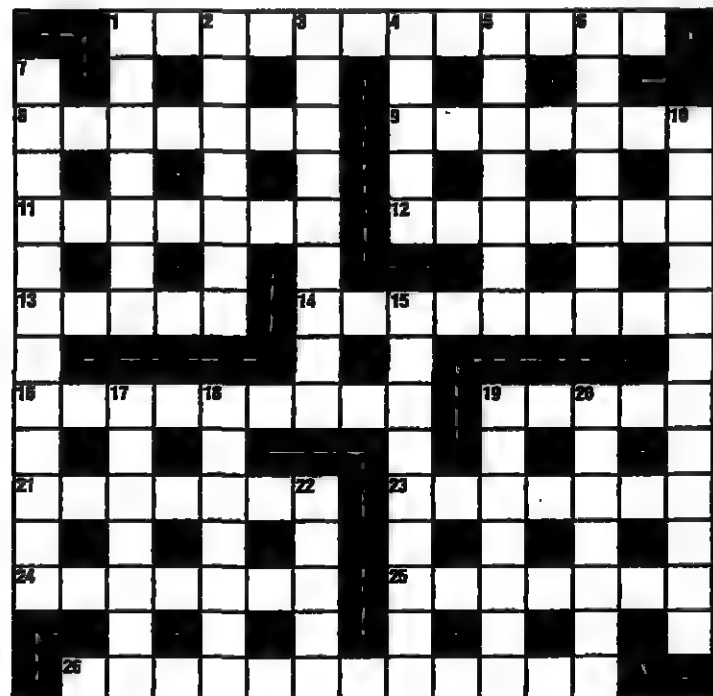
Nigel Williamson on grandmother and rock legend Tina Turner, live at Wembley Arena

EDUCATION

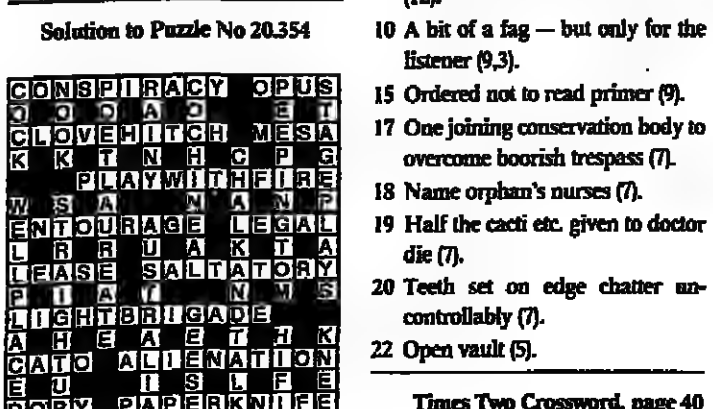
The Times guide to Britain's top universities for research, subject by subject



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,355



- ACROSS**
- Start a flood, perhaps, and so cause financial ruin (5,3,4).
 - Brouhaha about old film actress (7).
 - Credit cards don't wear out when covered in film (7).
 - Starts to return second National Insurance payment (7).
 - In a manner of speaking, not subjecting to VAT? (7).
 - Leaders of local authority respect good educationalists in comprehension (5).
 - Wild animal sheltered by more mature vet in US (3,6).
 - Lamenting spoilt evening (9).
 - Fish renowned for fat-free diet (5).
 - Mighty queen has lost a cape (7).
 - American accessory demonstrating nerve and commitment (7).
- DOWN**
- Ordinary juror out in extraordinary cases (7).
 - Steel is not, ultimately, tempered enough (7).
 - Chest some about undercooked regional dish (5,7).
 - Metal worker making heater (7).
 - Following god I have found to be wearing (7).
 - This could replace broken set (9).
 - Large, clumsy creature makes cheer-leader potty (5).
 - Part of Belgium where unruly child must accept restriction (7).
 - Meagre amount of alcohol put around trifle (7).
 - Chips, perhaps, boy had with fish (12).
 - A bit of a bag — but only for the listener (9,3).
 - Ordered not to read primer (9).
 - One joining conservation body to overcome boorish trespass (7).
 - Name orphan's nurses (7).
 - Half the cast etc. given to doctor die (7).
 - Teeth set on edge chatter uncontrollably (7).
 - Open vault (5).



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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY DECEMBER 19 1996

Clarke buoyant on economy after record fall in unemployment

Jobless below 2 million

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, forecast yesterday that Britain's economy will continue to strengthen in the run-up to the general election after a huge fall in unemployment took the number of people out of work to below two million.

Unemployment, seasonally adjusted, fell 95,800 — the largest single drop since current records began, and the biggest monthly decline since just after the Second World War. Ministers lined up to cheerlead the enormous drop in claimant unemployment, with Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, linking it to yesterday's good retail sales figures to show that "people realise the recovery is here to stay, and they themselves are taking the recovery into account".

Mr Clarke called the fall to below two million — the first time it has been below this threshold since 1991 — an "important breakthrough", and said that strong growth and economic recovery in Britain was now getting unemployment down and creating more jobs. He said his "confident expectation is that the economy is going to continue to strengthen", and he denied suggestions from City economists that the labour market was overheating, and that the figures would lead to a rise in interest rates.

Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, attacked Labour "wags" at Britain's economic performance, while Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, gave warning that Labour's plans to sign the European social charter and introduce a national minimum wage would, if enacted, send UK unemployment back up to three million.

Labour poured scorn on the Government's figures, saying that "more people believe in Santa Claus" than in the official unemployment count. John Prescott, Labour's Deputy Leader, said: "After years of fiddling the claimant figures, with more than 30 changes since 1979, the Tories can now claim that unemployment is below two million. The problem is no one believes their bogus figures." Ministers and

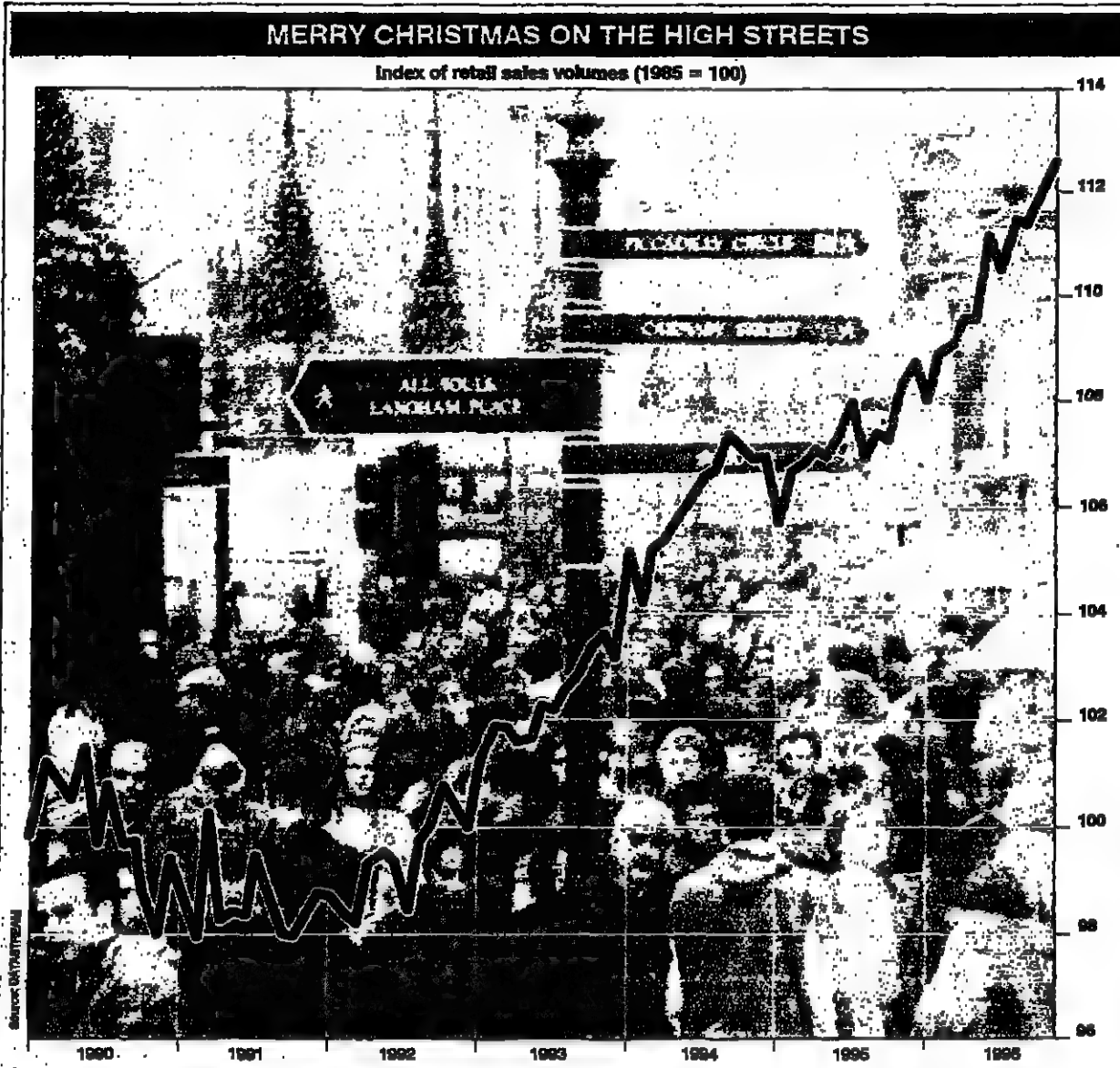
Whitehall officials were taken aback by the size of the fall, the largest since the current series of seasonally adjusted figures began in January 1971, and the biggest since the then-Ministry of Labour introduced adjusted figures in 1948.

Claimant unemployment fell 95,800 in November to 1,925,400 — a rate of 6.9 per cent, down from 7.2 per cent the previous month. The unemployment rate in Northern Ireland dropped below 10 per cent to 9.9, for the first time in 15 years.

Unadjusted unemployment — the actual number of people out of work and successfully claiming benefits — went through the two million barrier last month, and fell again in November by 105,837 to 1,871,398. The adjusted decline means that unemployment has now fallen by more than one million from its peak in December 1992.

Whitehall officials stressed a number of special factors behind the figure, including temporary work at Christmas and the first full month of the jobseeker's allowance. Government economists stressed that, even with such factors, the figures still showed a "very substantial" fall in the claimant count.

New figures on employment showed the number of jobs up by 264,000 on a year ago, while the rise in average earnings was steady for the fourth successive month at 4 per cent.



Good tidings for Christmas sales

By Janet Bush, Economics Correspondent

RETAIL sales showed healthier than expected gains in November which, together with yesterday's news of a huge fall in unemployment, raised City expectations that base rates will have to rise again in the new year.

Verdict Research, the retail consultants, said in a report published today that Christmas trade is expected to be the best for eight years but that there is no boom in prospect. It gave warning that the usual cat and mouse games played between shoppers and retailers each Christmas are still

dominating high streets this year and that not all retailers are expected to share in the shopping spree.

Verdict noted that a number of clothing and footwear retailers have introduced pre-Christmas sales to entice shoppers to spend.

Nevertheless, the group is expecting the value of retail sales to be worth just under £20 billion for December in total. This is a rise of 7.7 per cent compared with last year and easily the best level of trade since 1988. "With the average household spending nearly

£1,000 during December, the consumer recovery is well and truly here," Verdict said.

Retail sales volumes rose 0.7 per cent, according to the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics. This was a somewhat larger increase than the 0.5 per cent rise the City had been expecting but still left year-on-year growth in sales slightly lower. Annual growth was 3.9 per cent in November compared with 4.1 per cent in October.

Short sterling futures contracts, traded on the Liffe market and the best guide to

market interest rate expectations, slumped yesterday as expectations of base-rate rises in the spring increased.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, yesterday said that he remained unflinching in his determination to hit the Government's inflation target but said that inflationary pressures in the economy remained "quite reasonable".

The City was yesterday concerned that, despite plunging producer price inflation, strong consumer demand will encourage retailers to raise their margins rather than take

advantage of lower prices from their industrial suppliers to keep a cap on their prices.

Some economists — without the benefit of Verdict's comment on the sector — noted that clothing and footwear sales rose 2 per cent in November despite a price rise in the sector of 1.1 per cent in the month. John O'Sullivan of NatWest Markets said: "This is clear evidence that the momentum behind high street spending is eroding consumers' sensitivity to price increases."

Pennington, page 23

Woolwich to fight ending of takeover safeguard

By Anne Ashworth

THE Woolwich has pledged that it will fight to amend the Building Societies Bill published yesterday.

The society emphasised that the Bill's proposal to remove the five-year takeover protection period for societies that become banks could hamper its £3 billion flotation. But there is, as yet, no sign that the society would be prepared to abandon its plans before the distribution next month of its transfer document setting out the details of its conversion.

Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, has refused to bow to demands to retain the protective ring, which will be lifted if a newly floated society embarks on the takeover trail. In a statement, the Woolwich said: "We are disappointed the minister has chosen to ignore our serious concerns with regard to the timing of this Bill."

A Woolwich spokeswoman said that the society had recommended to the minister that societies could continue to be safeguarded against predators if they engaged only in friendly takeovers. She continued: "Had the Woolwich known that a change of this magnitude was even a possibility, we may have followed a different path to conversion."

Previously, the most fervent opponent of the abolition of the protection period has been the Alliance & Leicester. This society said yesterday that it shared the Woolwich's misgivings and disappointment. Last month, Peter White, the society's chief executive, gave a warning that its conversion, scheduled for next April, could be in doubt if the five-year protection period was abolished.

Explaining why she had declined to retain the safeguard, Mrs Knight commented: "If you choose to go to the market you have to play by the rules." She remains quietly confident that parliamentary time will be found for the Bill whose contents met with the approval of the Building Societies Association and several societies that are pledged to retain their mutualism.

Pennington, page 23

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDEXES		
FTSE 100	4018.2	(+38.6)
Yield	3.96%	
FTSE All share	1965.31	(+15.86)
Nikkei	20093.03	(-320.43)
Dow Jones	8341.01	(+22.63)
S&P Composite	731.11	(+5.07)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	5 3/8%	(5 3/8%)
Yield	6.85%	(6.85%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Libor long go	10 1/4%	(10 1/4%)

STERLING		
New York	1.6723	(1.6717)
London		
DM	1.6728	(1.6728)
DM	2.5988	(2.5983)
FF	8.7580	(8.7255)
SP	2.2273	(2.2087)
Yen	190.10	(190.31)
S index	94.4	(94.0)

DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.6838	(1.6800)
FF	8.5222	(8.2903)
SP	2.3320	(2.3260)
Yen	113.60	(113.88)
S index	98.2	(98.1)

TOKYO		
Tokyo close	Yen 113.38	

NORTH SEA OIL		
Oil price		
Brent 15-day (Mar)	62.70	(62.00)

GOLD		
London close	\$388.00	(\$388.00)
* denotes midday trading price		

Pensions Act limits loans to employers

By Robert Miller

NEW rules to prevent trustees lending pension scheme cash to their employer were laid before Parliament yesterday.

From April occupational schemes cannot make loans or give financial guarantees to their sponsoring business. The rules form part of the Pensions Act, drawn up after the £400 million losses sustained by the Maxwell pension funds. They still restrict schemes to a maximum 5 per cent self-investment in the parent company, but tighten the 1992 rules.

Oliver Heald, Pensions Minister, said: "These proposals could save people's pension if the company fails. They prevent employers using the pension scheme as a soft option, rather than conventional lending outlets, such as banks."

London Electricity agrees deal

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

LONDON ELECTRICITY is set for a £1.26 billion takeover by Entergy of America after agreeing a deal that leaves just two of Britain's regional electricity companies independent and without bid offers.

The move means that half of the electricity supply businesses in England and Wales could soon be in US hands. US concerns have bought three companies; Northern Electric is subject to a hostile bid from a US grouping; and the Government yesterday cleared a bid by Dominion Resources, of Virginia, for East Midlands Electricity.

Four London Electricity directors are set to make a profit

of just under £1 million from share options on the 705p a share bid, which marks a 27 per cent premium on the share price. In late October, when news leaked of Entergy's talks, shares in Southern Electric and Yorkshire Electricity, the two without bid offers, increased as the market predicted a complete clear-out.

Terry Ogletree, president of Entergy Power Group, said the purchase of London fitted the business's international strategy. But he emphasised that London's future as the competitive market for household electricity approached lay in joint ventures and links.

He declined to confirm spec-

ulation that London had sealed a supply link with Northern, but he said that would be an appropriate move.

Thames Water said a takeover of London would not end existing links between the companies.

Sir Bob Reid, chairman of London Electricity, who met Ed Lupberger, chief executive officer of Entergy Power UK, yesterday, said: "Tapping into the resources of the Entergy group, both human and financial, will provide a solid foundation for the future development of the company."



Lupberger: in meeting

Pennington, page 23

BA sells USAir stake en route to American

By Oliver August

BRITISH AIRWAYS is to sell its 24.6 per cent stake in USAir in preparation for its alliance with American Airlines. BA, which paid \$400 million for the shares in 1993, has given USAir 60 days to make an offer before other airlines will be invited to bid.

Although BA was obliged, under US accounting rules, to write down the value of the stake by half, it is worth around \$425 million at current market prices.

The link with USAir has been overshadowed by the proposed alliance with American. Incensed by BA's planned link-up with American, USAir is suing BA in a US federal court and has said it would end its code-sharing pact early next year. The move was not demanded by regulators who only stipulated that USAir should be free to compete on transatlantic routes.

Newcastle United ready to set £160m flotation goal

By Jason Nisbet

NEWCASTLE UNITED will announce plans today for a £160 million flotation, making it the second largest quoted football club after Manchester United.

The proceeds will be used to fund a £40 million, 60,000-seater stadium, which has still to receive final planning permission from Newcastle City Council, and pay off a large portion of the £60 million invested in the club by Sir John Hall, its chairman, who owns 90 per cent of the shares.

The float, first revealed in *The Times* in June, will value the club at four times the projected turnover for the 1996-97 season, in spite of the club recording an £11 million loss last year and expecting a large deficit this year. Newcastle writes

off the cost of players as soon as they are bought and has spent more than £60 million over five years.

Sir John had hoped to float the group as a sporting club, including his rugby, ice hockey, basketball and motor racing teams. But these have now been placed in another company and there is speculation that Sir John may stand down as chairman after the float.

It will be the third club to announce its flotation this week and the sixth this month. Yesterday Sheffield United confirmed plans for its reverse takeover by Conrad, the leisurewear group. The club is also raising £12.5 million to pay for redevelopment of its stadium.

West Bromwich Albion, in the Nationwide first division, is to join the Alternative Investment Market.

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□ The politics of power bids □ Mixed reception for Societies Bill □ Perverse view taken on retail sales

Final test for the domino theory

It is not often that stock market investors see the equivalent of a bundle of banknotes lying unwanted in the middle of the road, and no moral obligation to hand the lot into the local police station. But the current share price of London Electricity at 696p is saying there is a significant chance of the bid, at 719.5p a share if you include the promised interim dividend, not going ahead.

There is only one reason why this might happen, and this is government interference. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, has shown himself hugely unpredictable of late, but there seems no reason why he should allow through a controversial and contested American offer for Northern Electric and then block an agreed one for London.

Put this to the market doubters, and they mutter that a purchase of London could be "too politically sensitive", a view that has now become received wisdom. The argument seems to be that the capital's power lines are so sacred, keeping the lights burning for all those politicians, industrialists and opinion formers, that they cannot be risked in foreign hands. Does this mean that those living in more benighted parts of the British Isles can cheerfully be cast into the outer darkness? Presumably not. Assume Mr

Lang is in a rational mood. The deal will go through at that price, even if no counter-bid looks likely. Northern's share price spent the day moving backwards, as the market gradually decided the level of the London offer meant its own terms, to be decided on by shareholders by tomorrow lunchtime, were less attractive. It is hard to make this stack up from the mathematics. The advisers to Entergy worked it thus. They looked at the terms on offer in the third running electricity bid, for East Midlands, substituted London's cash flow, and ended at 77 or so, adding the dividend to appear on the generous side. London wasn't arguing.

But East Midlands and London are very similar businesses. Northern is not, with a more stretched balance sheet and in a less attractive part of the country, in energy consumption terms. It flies in the face of logic to assess the three on the same basis. The 780p Northern was suggesting yesterday looks a fantasy. But the battle will be a near-run thing. The London offer seems to seal

the fate of the remaining two regional electricity distributors, Yorkshire and Southern. American power firms are keen to buy here both to escape a restrictive regulatory straight-jacket at home and to gain experience in our system of regulation, widely expected to be adopted there and in various growth markets for electricity around the world.

They will have to do so before the election and will not be put off by any windfall tax. Heaven knows what Mr Lang will do when the last domino falls. But look on the bright side. A fair few merchant bankers have had their Christmases ruined.

Mutual joy could be short-lived

THOSE building societies keen on mutualism were effusive in their welcome for the new revised Building Societies Bill. They may live to regret their enthusiasm. One senior figure at a society headed for the stock market made the usual seasonal quip about "turkeys voting for Christmas", suggesting that the

PENNINGTON



legislation left the determinedly mutual set more vulnerable to takeovers than before.

Continuing in the same ornithological vein, he said the Bill afforded societies no greater protection and left them like so many "sitting ducks", tasty meals for predators such as BAT. This last would indeed love a sizeable mutual such as the Nationwide, while there are plenty of other aggressors such as Lloyds TSB, already owner of the Cheltenham & Gloucester.

It is hard not to agree with him. Some might find it surprising that the societies did not lobby more aggressively for the strengthening of the two-year rule. This prevents those who have not been with a society for

this length of time from receiving cash on the takeover of a society. They can, however, be rewarded in shares, which amounts to the same thing.

Ever the politician, Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, has declined to play hunt the carpet-bagger and reduce the numbers of investors eligible for a payout. Anxious to spread the "feel-good" factor far and wide, she would never have wanted to make it more difficult for as many as possible to pick a parcel of free shares. Some cynical commentators have even suggested this keenness to ensure as many households as possible receive such windfalls may have something to do with the election. Perish the thought.

The result is that predators will find it easier to persuade the members of a society to accept their offer. Had the Bill moved to exclude members of less than two years standing from windfalls, they could, in a fit of pique, have used their votes to rebuff the aggressor. Instead, they benefit from the rest. The Bill may still not gain the necessary parliamentary time.

But whether it becomes law or not, it has added extra spice to that favourite national sport, Mutual Lottery.

'Tis the season to be gloomy

BRITAIN'S history of boom and bust is now so entrenched in the national psychology that some welcome perkiness on the high street is condemned as a wicked luxury. So yesterday's rise of 0.7 per cent in retail sales in November — a whopping 0.2 per cent more than City scribbles had been expecting — was greeted as a danger signal, warning of inflation and higher interest rates ahead. Scrooge would have been proud of us.

Let us examine the facts. Growth in retail sales has actually slowed down from the summer months. In November, four out of five of the non-food sales categories measured by official statisticians saw their annual growth rates fall. The main target of suspicion for the City's inflation Jeremiah was the fact that clothing and foot-

wear sales rose healthily despite the fact that prices are rising.

But put this in perspective. Clothing and footwear prices are only just higher than a year ago having showed year on year falls for months. Verdict: Research yesterday specifically noted that clothing and footwear was a patchy sector, so much so that a number of retailers had introduced pre-Christmas sales to try and entice shoppers to spend.

If that doesn't lighten dark thoughts of inflation, so curmudgeonly in this festive season, perhaps it is worth noting that November's sales predated the latest round of mortgage increases. Together with the base rate rise the City so confidently expects early next year, perhaps we consumers should be allowed to enjoy a tiny spending spree before the sky falls in.

Building cracks

RECOVERY for the building industry is now officially under way. Builders are like farmers — it is too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry. The first sign of any upturn is moaning about labour shortages, which send wages higher. A warning arrived on cue yesterday, from the chartered surveyors. Having spent six years laying people off because of falling workload, the builders are now short of staff again.

Gulf bid for Clyde lifts oil exploration shares

By CARL MORTIMER

OIL exploration stocks soared yesterday as Gulf Canada Resources launched a surprise bid for Clyde Petroleum.

The Canadian energy group, once part of Olympia & York, the Reichmann brothers' failed property empire, is offering \$432 million in cash, or 105p per share, for the British North Sea exploration company, which recently acquired assets in Indonesia and Australia.

Clyde's share price jumped from 84p to 118p on news of the bid. Clyde's board later said that the offer was unacceptable and failed to take account of the group's record and prospects.

Other oil shares, including Enterprise, Hardy and Lasso, joined the rally, and analysts predicted that Gulf

Canada's move would spark off other bids in the UK's independent oil exploration sector.

Colin Smith, analyst at BZW, explained that UK oil shares looked cheap to North American companies valuing the sector on cashflow multiples. "This could be the return of 1988 when prices in the North Sea lost touch with reality. Now is not the time to sell," he commented.

Gulf Canada's bid came without warning. James Bryan, chief executive officer, said he had no previous contact with Clyde and only attempted to call its chairman, Malcolm Gourlay, minutes before the bid terms were published by the Stock Exchange. Mr Bryan said: "I think this is the best way to do it. We put out a price

Rexam to sell off 20 businesses

By MARKIANNE CURPREY

REXAM, the paper and packaging company, confirmed yesterday that it is to put 20 businesses with a total turnover of £300 million on the market (Alasdair Murray writes).

The move follows a review that resulted in the company restructuring into seven divisions.

While looking for buyers, the company will place the businesses in a new division, Rexam Octagon.

Rolf Borjesson, chief executive, said the company would initially use proceeds from the sales to cut debt although it would seek to strengthen its divisions in the medium term. Rexam said that about 4,000 staff would be affected by the sale plan. It was confident that job losses would be minimised. *Tempus*, page 24

First Choice cuts payout despite profits recovery

By MARKIANNE CURPREY

FIRST Choice Holidays, the UK's third largest tour operator, is cutting the total dividend for 1996 in spite of a recovery in pre-tax profits to £10 million from £1.3 million.

The total dividend for the year to October is cut to 2.8p from 3.85p previously, with a final payment of 1.4p.

Peter Long, managing director, who replaced Francis Baron after a boardroom dispute, said that he hoped to achieve a future dividend cover of three times earnings. The group has declined to say when this might occur.

Earnings per share for the full year were 2.1p, compared with a 1.6p loss in 1995.

Mr Baron was paid £600,000 on the termination of his contract, it was disclosed yesterday. The group confirmed that David Gill, group finance director, was joining



Baron: £600,000 payment

Manchester United and would be replaced by Lance Moir, formerly at Bass, in February. The shares rose 4½p to

63½p yesterday amid hopes that the new management team would improve margins and reduce costs.

The dividend cut comes 13 months after First Choice launched a £44.1 million rights issue at 60p a share to enable it to buy Skibound, the leading operator in the UK group ski market.

Meanwhile, Thomson and Airtrous, the two biggest tour operators, have been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for alleged anti-competitive behaviour, a charge that First Choice has escaped.

Mr Long said that bookings for the UK summer season were up 42 per cent on last year and the group had sold 25 per cent of full-season capacity, compared with 17 per cent in 1995. Winter bookings are down 2 per cent.

Tempus, page 24

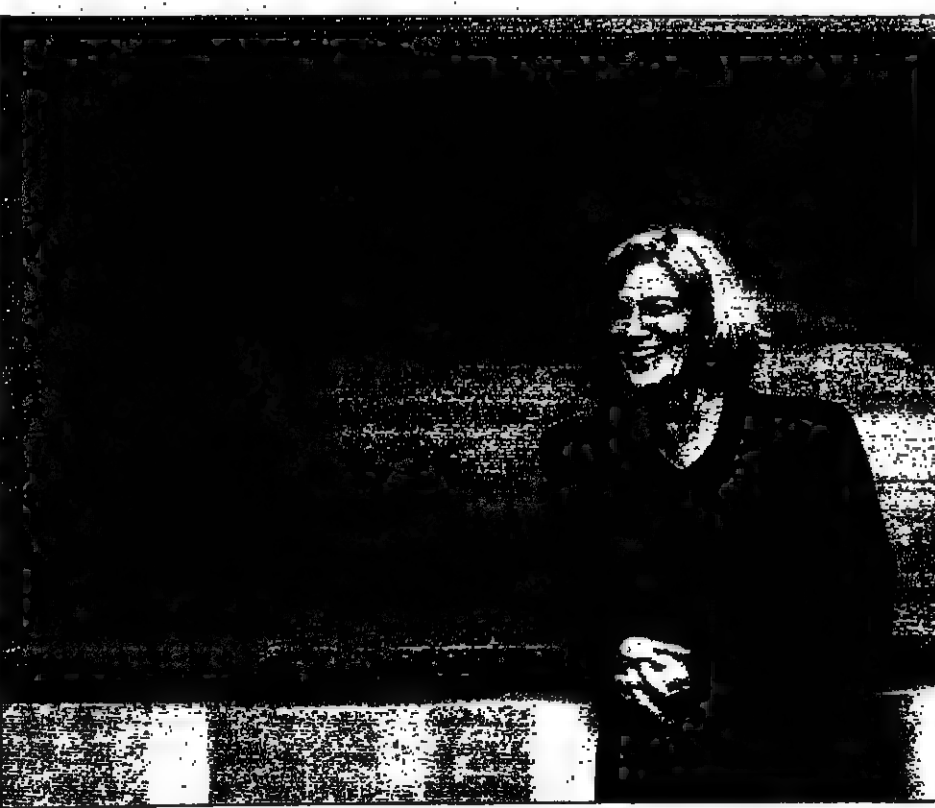
Channel 5 tunes in to £150m costs

By ERIC ROBERTS

PEARSON, the publishing and entertainment company, confirmed yesterday that returning costs of Channel 5, where it has a 24 per cent holding, have climbed to £150 million, more than double the original estimate. The cost, revealed in *The Times* last week, was contained in an end-of-year trading statement. The channel will make its debut on March 30.

Pearson also confirmed that Mindscape, its US computer games business, is expected to lose £46 million but will break even late next year.

Analysts think Marjorie Scardino, who replaces Frank Barlow as chief executive in January, will sell Mindscape. There is speculation that she may sell Pearson's half interest in Lizards, as well as Madame Tussauds.



Marjorie Scardino is thought likely to sell Mindscape when she joins Pearson as chief executive

Salisburys collapse costly for Hartstone

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE collapse of the Salisburys chain of handbag and luggage shops cost Hartstone Group, the hosiery and leather goods manufacturer, £1 million and helped to push it £2.1 million into the red in the first half of this year.

Hartstone was a supplier to Salisburys, which was the first company bought during the expansion of Pacia, which was put into receivership in June.

In the six months to September 30, Hartstone also in-

London ammunition for Northern defence

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

NORTHERN ELECTRIC has stepped up its fight against CE Electric's £782 million hostile bid, which closes tomorrow, by arguing that the bid for London Electricity increased the value of independent electricity companies.

CE Electric is offering 650p for each Northern share. But Northern says it would be worth 780p a share on the multiple used for London by Entergy. Northern has previously indicated a value of 745p

a share but would have discussed a bid around 700p.

David Morris, Northern's chairman, said: "CE Electric is looking to short-change investors in Northern Electric with a price whose inadequacy is further highlighted by today's bid for London Electricity."

David Sokol, chairman and chief executive of CE Electric, said: "Entergy had the opportunity to acquire Northern Electric at a price of more than 650p per share but chose not to."

Mayflower's £38m paperchase

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

AN administrative mix-up has led to millions of pounds worth of share certificates being issued by Mayflower Holdings, the vehicle parts company, even though they cannot be traded until Monday.

A total of 32.8 million new shares at 126p have been

issued by Mayflower in its £38 million rights issue to help fund the company's £165 million acquisition of SCSSM Holdings, the US pressing business.

Mayflower said yesterday that investors acquiring shares in the company should not accept settlement through the new certificates until the rights issue shares are official-

ly admitted to the Stock Exchange on December 23.

The certificates were distributed by the company's registrars, the Royal Bank of Scotland, on December 12. Neither the Royal Bank nor Mayflower were yesterday willing to accept responsibility for the mistake. Mayflower's existing shares closed unchanged at 142½p.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Festive boost pushes the index back above 4,000

A BOUT of pre-Christmas window dressing and a sharp opening rise on Wall Street carried share prices in London back above the 4,000 level to close near their best of the day.

Boosted by news of three sizeable takeovers and an opening gain for the Dow Jones industrial average of more than 40 points, the FTSE 100 index soared 38.6 to close at 4,018.2. Turnover also reached its highest this week with 523 million shares changing hands. However, it appears that much of the turnover can be accounted for by intra trading between market-makers. Genuine retail demand was thin on the ground.

The agreed offer of 705p a share for London Electricity from Entergy, the US power group, came as no surprise. London responded with a rise of 13p at 696.5p. The deal values London at £1.2 billion.

It follows close on the heels of last week's decision by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, to allow CE Electric's bid for Northern Electric to proceed. Northern closed 5.1p cheaper at 630p. The Government also gave the go-ahead yesterday for Dominion Resources to pursue its £1.3 billion bid for East Midlands, 4p higher at 661.5p.

But the market was caught on the hop by the agreed bid for Clyde Petroleum of 105p a share from Gulf Canada Resources. Clyde rejected the bid, which values it at £432 million, out of hand. Clyde responded with a rise of 34p to 118p as almost five million shares changed hands.

The bid for Clyde and the Government decision to offer remaining blocks of the North Sea for exploration also prompted mark-ups for Cairn Energy, 21.4p to 411.5p, Enterprise Oil, 24p to 595.5p, and Anglo Oil & Gas, 23.5p to 296p. Premier Oil & Gas, 4p to 65p, and Lloyds, 7.5p to 22.7p.

Michael Ashcroft's ADT surged 162.5p to £13.75 as Western Resources offered to mop up the outstanding 73 per cent of the shares in a swap over for \$3.5 billion. In September ADT abandoned a \$5 billion merger with Republic Industries because of market uncertainty.

General Accident finished 19p higher at 735.5p on persistent suggestions that BAT Industries may be looking to bid after talks with Commer-



BA was 9.1p higher after Bob Ayling charted a new course

cial Union about a possible merger broke down. Commercial Union came in for profit-taking after hitting a high this week on speculative buying. It finished 6.1p cheaper at 686.5p.

Some bearish comments from NatWest Securities left Renkold 2p lighter at 437p. After meeting the company earlier this week the broker

Laird, the brokers, both rate the shares a "buy".

British Airways rose 9.1p to 601p after telling USAir it planned to dispose of its 24.6 per cent shareholding. Bob Ayling, chief executive, said BA regretted the action but would not get into bed with an unwilling partner. USAir decided on legal action after BA announced plans to link up

with rival American Airlines. Fairley rose 4.1p to 586.5p on further reflection of its £51.1 million bid for Burnfield, 1p firmer at 136p. The terms value Burnfield at 146.6p a share.

The capital restructuring at Wessex Water left the shares 1p easier at 365.5p. As part of the deal Waste Management International will reduce its holding from 19.5 per cent to

3.3 per cent, with Wessex bidding 380p for 10 per cent of the shares not held by WMI. The entire cost of the buyback is estimated at £240 million. This follows the Government's decision to block Wessex's bid for South West Water, down 12.5p at 596.5p.

Hartstone firmed 1p to 12.4p after holding the dividend despite plunging into the red in the first six months. Losses were £2.1 million compared with a profit last time of almost £3 million. Increased losses at Richards left its shares 4p off at 43.5p.

The decision not to pay a dividend and to ask shareholders for an extra £3.1 million left Creighton's National nursing a fall of 12.5p at 27.5p. The placing and open offer at 23p will be used to secure the group's immediate future. The group plunged into the red last year with losses of £1.4 million.

A near doubling of profits lifted Dawson Holdings 22.5p to £21.75. Profit growth is expected to come from its electronic publishing arm.

BZW Endowment Fund established an opening premium after the issue had been oversubscribed. The investment trust was offered at 50p and, after reaching a high for the day of 52.5p, closed at 52p. Aspen Communications dropped 21p to 107.5p after warning that a change in its accounting policy will reduce profits this year by £500,000.

A leap in profits last year and news of a strong rise in bookings for the summer season next year lifted First Choice 4.1p to 631.5p. GILT-EDGED: The bond market scored some early losses after reacting badly to the latest fall in the unemployment numbers. The short end of the market bore the brunt of the falls, while longer dated issues closed above their starting point. This produced a further flattening of the yield curve.

In futures the March series of the long gilt closed at 108.11, as a total of 46,000 contracts were traded. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 rose 1/8 to £101.75, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was seven ticks down at £102.75.

NEW YORK: High technology shares were back in favour on Wall Street and the sector's bounce helped prices generally. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 32.66 points higher at 6,341.01.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 6341.01 (+32.66)
S&P Composite 731.11 (+5.07)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 20993.03 (+320.43)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 12766.02 (+49.35)

Amsterdam:
BOE Index 618.43 (+5.49)

Sydney:
AO 2323.7 (+7.9)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2820.75 (+5.62)

Singapore:
Strait 2195.78 (+19.26)

Brussels:
General 10357.68 (+72.28)

Paris:
CAC-40 2218.89 (+25.19)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 831.10 (+5.03)

London:
FT 30 2762.6 (+22.8)
FT 100 4018.2 (+38.6)
FTSE 100 4018.2 (+38.6)
FTSE 250 1994.0 (+16.7)
FTSE 1000 1855.83 (+18.28)
FT All-Share 1965.31 (+15.28)
FT Non-Financial 2044.34 (+15.28)
FT Financial 116.10 (+0.17)
FT Govt Secs 93.81 (+0.37)
Bloomberg 3329.9
SEAQ Volume 630,770
USM (Datastream) 189.22 (+0.68)
US\$ 1.6725 (+0.0007)
German Mark 2.5999 (+0.0158)
Exchange Index 94.4 (+0.4)
CBOE Vol 1.376
ESOP 2.593
RPI 153.9 Nov (2.7%) Jan 1997: 100
RPIX 153.7 Nov (3.3%) Jan 1997: 100

RECENT ISSUES

Advanced Power 80% ...
Active Dedicated 100 ...
BZW Endowment Red 52 ...
Cablecast 237 ...
Car Group 193 ...
Coit Telecom (275) 280 ...
Dawn Tel Dusk 121 ...
Ester Inv 97 ...
Financ Ind Hedge 4 ...
Future Int Tele (115) 125 ...
Grahamer Ridge 130 ...
Henderson Tech C 332 ...
Henderson Tech W 37 ...
Henderson Tech 98 ...
Highways Systems 118 ...
Kier Group 185 ...
Kier Group 49 ...
Oliver Ashworth 135 ...
On-Line 97 ...
Oxford Biomedica 60 ...
Parkwood Holdings 80 ...
Preston 32 ...
Preston (125) 137 ...
SDX Business Sys 170 ...
Scott Highland Hds 137 ...
Second St David Inc 110 ...
Second St David Res 9 ...
Second St David W 184 ...
Sempia Cochrane 3 ...
Team Group 157 ...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Allied Colloids n/p 8 ...
Auklet n/p (S) 1 ...
Asian n/p (620) ...
Bloomcomposites n/p 245 ...

MAJOR FINANCIAL

RISER:
Fibrotic Com 309p (+24p)
Enterprise 595p (+24p)
Man Utd 615p (+17p)
Rank Group 442p (+12p)
Shield Dig 144p (+3p)

FALLS:
Thorp And Inc 387p (-10p)
Laporte 634p (-14p)
Fine Art Day 230p (-8p)
Britannic 724p (-8p)

Closing Prices Page 27

TEMPUS

Looking down the barrel

GULF Canada Resources is a company in a hurry. A management buy-in team runs the oil explorer that emerged from the mess of the Olympia & York real estate collapse. The company's bank shareholders are said to be patient, but its directors are chafing at the bit and Calgary is too small a town for them. The bright lights of London have drawn them here and little Clyde looks cheap.

Gulf will have to offer more to get what it wants. The price on the table is worth about \$5 per proven barrel of oil, hardly expensive compared with the huge premium recently paid by Saga in its £1.2 billion bid for Santa Fe Exploration. Moreover, Gulf's price probably excludes the benefit of Clyde's recent acquisition from BHP, which adds another 20 million technical barrels that Clyde acquired for about 65 cents a barrel.

If Gulf is unlikely to take Clyde at this price — the bidder seems to know this having set up a loan facility for twice the value of yesterday's offer — the other certainty is that rivals are doing their sums. North Sea assets look cheap to North Americans; several US companies (Conoco, Arco and Chevron) took part in the Santa Fe auction and Gulf's bid represents less than five times the cashflow of Clyde in 1996. Scandinavian oil companies are also desperate for foreign exposure and, if Saga is any guide, are prepared to pay high prices, claiming that their cost of capital is low.

In the longer term, investors may wonder how sensible these bids would look on oil prices of \$17 or less. The futures market is not assuming that \$23 oil has a big future but in the meantime holders of UK oil exploration shares can laugh all the way to the bank.

First Choice

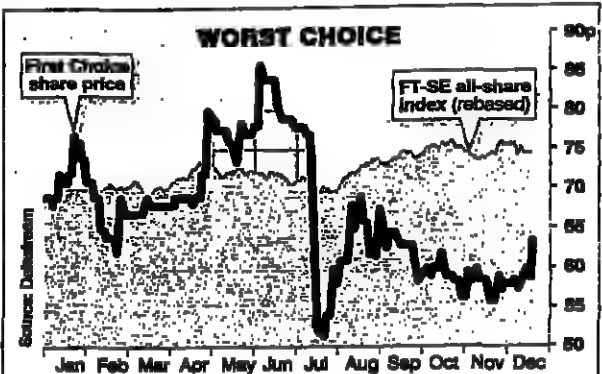
A DIVIDEND cut is not much of a thank-you to the institutions who, a year ago, backed First Choice's £44 million rights issue. However, the four operator has little money to splash around — a £10 million profit on £1 billion worth of turnover indicates that First Choice is still the number three operator in the UK behind Airtours, which produced £89 million on revenues of £1.7 billion. Better cost control and a programme that includes cruising and Scandinavia helped Airtours.

Peter Long, First Choice's

group managing director following the departure of Francis Baron, makes much of the inefficiencies of the old regime and the brave cutting regime of the new one. But First Choice still lacks dedicated high street distribution. In 1995, the worst trading year for holiday companies, profits came not from tour operating but from

travel agencies. Even if the Monopolies and Mergers Commission forces Thomson and Airtours to sell some outlets, they would still retain distribution clout.

To pull in the big profits First Choice needs to diversify overseas, but until its UK business is in order it can only dream about holidays abroad.



Rexam

REXAM, the paper and packaging company, has enjoyed a good run. After a lacklustre performance over the past year — compounded by its demotion from the FT-SE 100 — it was inevitable that the share price would rebound. The company has made all the right noises and yesterday's confirmation that it intends to sell off 20 underperforming businesses was greeted warmly in the City.

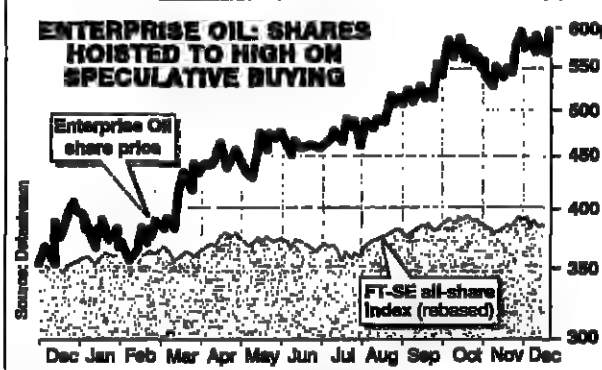
But restructuring solves only part of the company's problems. The paper market is flat in Europe, prompting Rexam to make a cautious trading statement with its intention in September. A strengthening pound is also likely to hurt Rexam. Overseas earnings will be weaker after translation into sterling and a stronger pound will increase competition at home. European paper manufacturers are suffering from overcapacity and should welcome the competitive advan-

tage of exporting to the UK. Rexam's new management deserves some credit for their efforts but there is little in the outlook to generate much excitement.

De Beers

NEWS that De Beers has issued an ultimatum to Russian diamond exporters is hardly the way to cheer up the jewellery trade just before Christmas. A little Christmas sparkle could be just the ticket for those seeking domestic peace over the holiday fortnight. Yet, diamonds are not so special if the Russians continue to dump them on the world market via shadowy merchants in Antwerp and Tel Aviv.

De Beers has spent ten months trying to secure signatures on a new trade agreement that would bring Russia back into the Central Selling Organisation fold. The CSO is a body that seeks to prevent diamond prices from falling and the only car-



COMMODITIES

ICE-USA (London & Offshore)
CRUDE OILS (Brent/Dubai FOB)

Dec 1996 22.80 -0.30
Jan 1997 22.80 -0.30
Feb 1997 22.80 -0.30
Mar 1997 22.80 -0.30
Apr 1997 22.80 -0.30
May 1997 22.80 -0.30
Jun 1997 22.80 -0.30
Jul 1997 22.80 -0.30
Aug 1997 22.80 -0.30
Sep 1997 22.80 -0.30
Oct 1997 22.80 -0.30
Nov 1997 22.80 -0.30
Dec 1997 22.80 -0.30

ICE-USA (London & Offshore)
CRUDE OILS (Brent/Dubai FOB)

Dec 1996 22.80 -0.30
Jan 1997 22.80 -0.30
Feb 1997 22.80 -0.30
Mar 1997 22.80 -0.30
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Oct 1997 22.80 -0.30
Nov 1997 22.80 -0.30
Dec 1997 22.80 -0.30

ICE-USA (London & Offshore)
CRUDE OILS (Brent/Dubai FOB)

Dec 1996 22.80 -0.30
Jan 1997 22.80 -0.30
Feb 1997 22.80 -0.30
Mar 1997 22.80 -0.30
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THE TIMES



CITY DIARY

Proof is in the pudding

PROOF that peace still plays an important part in the festive season... On the day that the Building Societies Bill was published, a Moomin Christmas pudding in a beautiful gold carrier was delivered to the door of Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

It was a Yuletide gift from Peter White, chief executive of the Alliance & Leicester, whose strong objections to "that clause" threatened to postpone the society's £2.5 billion conversion.

Satisfied that the parcel wasn't ticking, the Economic Secretary read the attached note. It was Father White wishing her a very Happy Christmas. Not one to miss a trick, he added just how sorry he was that White Knight couldn't make it to A&L's Christmas drinks last week.

Knight: peace meal.

Hedging bets

WHILE BBC1 and ITV slog it out on Christmas Day in their traditional festive ratings battle, one telly bigwig will be able to watch the fray with total detachment. Peter Orton, the urbane managing director of HIT Entertainment, which was floated on AIM in July, will have the pleasure of seeing two of his top children's shows aired on Christmas Day. BBC1 will be showing *Bramble Hedge* in the prime slot of 4.15pm, while ITV will show *Percy the Park Keeper* at 10.15am.

"Whichever channel wins the ratings battle, it is bound to be a HIT Christmas," Orton chuckles.

Cold caller

MICHAEL HARDERN, the arch building society carpetbagger, is braving the cold outside the Piccadilly branch of Bradford & Bingley. For the past week, the former butler to the Royal Family has been collecting signatures for his hard-fought campaign. Not to be outdone, B&B has installed an extra security guard on the door and recruited a regional officer to stand outside, explaining to passers-by that the campaigner is not the property of B&B.

SAFEWAYS has become the first supermarket in the UK to sell package holidays directly through a customer loyalty card scheme. The ABC Holiday Line will go live from the start of next year, offering discount holidays in exchange for ABC points.

Back on menu

A TURNAROUND at McDonnell Information Systems, the computer services group that floated last year, hit by hard times, its Christmas shindig was erased from the corporate calendar last December. Yesterday, however, it was back in force, celebrating at Claridge's.

PETER LONG, the recently appointed managing director at First Choice, was candid with analysts yesterday on one subject at least. He let slip on his plans for the holiday season. Not long in the job after the departure of Francis Baron in November, he made it clear that, as the new boy, he would be too busy to even think about going away.

MORAG PRESTON

Don't make dividends the scapegoat for low growth

corporate tax, just like interest on loans. Retentions finance most capital spending so this should boost investment.

As a quid pro quo for relief of profits, imputed tax on dividends could no longer be counted against corporation tax. And that means pension funds and charities could no longer claim 20 per cent back from the Inland Revenue. They would be no worse off, the business commission claims, because their shares would gain from the profits ploughed into investment.

In an ideal world, taxes should be neutral between risk capital and loans. In practice, as ever, the transition is not easy. Labour's commission, doubtless inspired by folk memories of 1965, takes care to recommit the elephant trap. The change would cost £4 billion in tax unless the rate of corporation tax was jacked up. Yet the low rate has helped to attract inward investment.

Axting pension funds' tax refunds might deter saving. The funds might press for higher dividends to compensate, as they did when Norman Lamont cut refunds from 25 to 20 per cent. Reform, the commission concludes, had best be phased in over ten



years, hoping that higher growth from extra investment will fill the gaps. Then there are the actuaries. They tend to value pension funds on projected future dividends. If actuaries thought dividends would be held back, funds could well be valued lower, obliging companies to stump up more in contributions instead of investing.

That does not mean actuaries are right. The accounting valuation of pension funds is up for discussion and could be changed, but the signs are not good. Accountants can hardly grumble. Balance-sheet valuations of

shareholders' funds bear little relation to each other, let alone market values. ACE would throw auditors into a tizzy, too.

No wonder the commission, including captains of industry, is sensibly lukewarm about its own proposal. Its report, due in the new year, will just call for reforms to remove bias in favour of dividends. But there is no reason to think that Britain's company tax system, or high dividends, unduly inhibit investment. Most top managers hate paying money to shareholders as much as they hate paying tax. As many tedious inquiries have concluded, however, Britain's low rate of investment is not due to lack of funds.

The GEC, whose new boss sat on the commission, has famously built up cash reserves for lack of enough investment opportunities that its board thought worth the risk. Many companies have geared up with loans to buy back their shares because they reckon it a better use of resources than expanding. That pays because equity capital "costs" more, an imbalance ACE would address. Equally, it shows that most big companies could borrow a lot more in tax-efficient loans to invest.

In the early 1990s, British Aerospace, also

represented on the commission, ploughed nothing back and had to pay dearly for new equity. That was because BAE was not profitable, so shareholders were not keen to invest more in it. The group was undercapitalised because management foolishly bought cash-hungry businesses on the strength of defence prepayments.

Dividends are not really the cost of equity capital. Rather, retentions are extra money shareholders are prepared to invest in the business. Investors in profitable, fast-growing companies are usually happy with relatively modest rises in dividends and keen to plough back more for investment. Conversely, shareholders in stagnant companies with low returns prefer to take the cash and invest it elsewhere. Managers who control their company can choose to plough back more and take more risk, which is good for the economy if they are right. Others must persuade investors.

In the long run, growth of investment depends on the growth of markets and the risks that have to be taken. Many managers and investors are now oversensitive to risk because their fingers have been burnt. Two slumps punished companies committed to expansion. High interest rates turned the screw. How much quicker and safer to buy other companies and cut costs.

Stable growth and low long-term interest rates are the only reliable levers to raise the rate of investment. Those impatient for short-term action would surely find that tax sticks are more effective than carrots and curbing takeovers costs nothing at all.

Philip Bassett assesses the accuracy of the reported fall in unemployment

Undeniable present for the Tories

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, glancing at his Cabinet colleagues flanking him yesterday — Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, and Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade — quipped: "As you can see, we are out in force."

Out in force ministers certainly were yesterday as the Government announced a huge 95,800 fall in claimant unemployment — the biggest monthly drop for a quarter of a century, taking seasonally adjusted unemployment to well below the significant threshold of two million for the first time for six years.

Why? What happened in November to produce such a huge fall? Is it real — and will it last? To try to answer these key questions, it is necessary to look at a range of special factors which may have affected yesterday's totals, and especially at figures which rarely get examined — not the levels of unemployment, or even the month-by-month changes, but the flow on, and off the claimant count.

In spite of the growth in long-term unemployment, joblessness is not, in the main, a static pool, but a constantly changing flow of people moving from their jobs — sometimes voluntarily, often not — into unemployment, and then often back into work.

Between October and November, 253,800 people joined the

unemployment count. While this is lower than a year ago — 86,700 lower — as unemployment continues to fall, it is not hugely different from the inflow over the previous month: only 500 lower. So not that many fewer people actually became unemployed.

But there was a large increase in the number of exits from the count — the outflow. According to the Office for National Statistics, 336,300 people left the count between October and November. This is higher than a year ago — 22,500 higher. In fact, as the economy improves, jobs grow, and unemployment declines. But it is as much as 22,400 higher than the previous month. A key to this is likely to be the introduction of the jobseeker's allowance — the Government's new payment to replace unemployment benefit. Yesterday's figures were the first to reflect a full month of the JSA's operation.

Opponents of the JSA argued that it would be a deterrent, and it seems to have been so. New claims are taking longer to process. Labour said yesterday it had many reports of the JSA's introduction being so "chaotic" that it made the claimant count figures meaningless — and Whitehall officials said the JSA's main rule change of means testing for benefit payment after six months rather than 12 months is likely to cut the count by some 5,000, while the administrative problems could account for a further



Michael Heseltine, Gillian Shephard and Kenneth Clarke gathered to bang the Government's drum on job figures

20,000 of the overall fall. Mrs Shephard praised such moves, insisting that the taxpayer was now getting better value for money by such measures helping to remove people from the unemployment count who ought not to be there. One of the problems for the Government is that, as *The Times* showed

yesterday, employment growth — now clearly in place — has not been at a sufficient pace to account for the tumbling unemployment rolls. Job vacancies are at an historically high level, with the number of unfilled vacancies in jobcentres — thought to be about a third of the total across the

economy — now at 269,700. Separate new employment figures from the ONS yesterday showed a 165,000 increase in the employer-based workforce in employment series, while the latest quarterly Labour Market Trends household-based survey, also released yesterday, confirmed

a slow rise in employment. However the time gap between the monthly claimant count unemployment series and the three-monthly LFS figures offers little help to one month's jobless numbers — and ministers have just rejected making the LFS monthly, on grounds of cost.

But new work by the ONS trying to track claimants leaving the unemployment count is showing that more people are moving from the count back into work. The number was 30 per cent higher — about 40,000 more people — than in November last year, which Whitehall officials took as a clear sign of real jobs growth.

Pizza Hut's announcement of 5,000 new jobs was the icing on the cake yesterday. But the Government's opponents see the growth of such jobs — often part-time, temporary, with what they see as poor conditions and low security and prospects — as an equally good example of the insubstantiality of the modern UK jobs market.

But even after allowing for every special factor — and some of them put forward in Whitehall yesterday were, to put it kindly, highly speculative — yesterday's figures showed an undeniably substantial fall in the claimant count: one so undeniable that Labour's attempts to cast doubt on the statistics seemed misguided and desperate in the face of figures for which at least there is little meaningful explanation other than the obvious one — that unemployment is down and going down.

Ministers may or may not be right to claim, as Mr Heseltine did yesterday, that the figures reflected Britain's improved competitiveness, or, as Mr Clarke did, its strong and sustainable economic growth, or as Mrs Shephard did, its flexible labour market, or, as Mr Lang did, its low burdens on business.

And while the current economic judgments, including the unemployment figures, new retail sales data yesterday and the glowing report on Britain's economy from the OECD earlier this week, brought ministers out in unprecedented numbers to beat the Government's drum, they were careful not to make a direct translation from that to people's electoral feelings.

Ministers know that such figures are a real boost to the electoral "feel-good" factor as well as the economy. Privately, they might not have minded them a touch closer to the election. But a 95,800 fall in unemployment will do very nicely, thank you, as a Christmas present.

Lloyd's heavies seek a softer image

Jon Ashworth on a legal firm wanting still more after a quantum-leap merger deal



Nigel Knowles rewrote the business plan when he arrived

For non-paying Lloyd's names, there is no greater enemy than the law firm of Dobb Lupton Alsop. The latest round of court action swings attention yet again on to the firm, and its partner, Philip Holden, who was seconded to Lloyd's two years ago to lead debt recoveries. Indignant refusals refer to "Holden and his heavies", ready to kick the door down, and take away everything, including the Christmas decorations. Not a cheery scenario.

The reality is a little different, of course. Holden has the weapons at his disposal — today's hearing is proof of that — but is seeking to soften his image. His door is open. Come and chat, and we can come to an agreement. Grumbling aside, a steady trickle of names has come forward to take up the offer.

Dobb will find the tough-guy image hard to dispel. Northern in origin, it launched its assault on London in 1994, poaching clients and staff, and taking panoramic offices in the City. Paul Rhodes, the abrasive managing partner, chain-smoked his way through packets of Marlboro Lights. Stuart Benson, head of business development, spurred the firm to new heights.

Two years on, Rhodes has found romance, resigned as managing partner and gone back to Leeds. He has quit smoking. Benson has found a new line in crisis management. Rhodes' successor, Nigel

Knowles, arrived in January, and set about rewriting the business plan. A key plank fell into place in October, when Dobb Lupton merged with Alsop Wilkinson, creating a practice with 1,600 staff and £100 million fee income. It is the UK's seventh largest law firm. The next set of dominoes toppled this week, when Cameron Markby Hewitt and McKenna & Co announced they intended to

merge in May. Cameron McKenna will challenge Dobb Lupton in fee income, but modestly claims eighth place. Dobb Lupton is trying to move away from stereotypes. Knowles, 40, says: "I don't think we've ever really been out to be the ruthless of the legal profession. People have called us aggressive. My usual response to that is, what do you mean by the word aggressive? Do you mean that we

seek to act for good clients, we seek to attract good people, and we seek to be profitable so that we can continue to grow the business? If that's aggressive, I don't agree."

Taking the Lloyd's assignment was never going to help matters. Holden, who has seen his stint extended until next summer, knows this only too well, and even Knowles accepts that there have been difficulties. "When we got the Lloyd's work, the headlines appeared to be, those ruthless, or debt collectors, from five North, have been instructed by Lloyd's. We started off getting billed as the debt collectors, and I think we're concluded by [taking] credit for having played a part in the rescue."

Dobb's fee income increased from £12 million to £36 million between 1989 and 1994, and virtually doubles again with the merger. But something more was needed to make that quantum leap. Knowles says: "I knew that we had traded for very many years on the strapline: 'We want to be a national commercial law firm'. That strapline was old, it was tired, and it wanted renewing." He set a target of becoming number one or two in each market in which the firm operates — except for London, where the aim was to be within the top five.

Knowles began to sound out firms with similar regional profiles, such as Hammond, Suddards and Eversheds, and finally settled on Alsop Wilkinson, which had a fee income of about £32 million. "It became clear there was a compelling business case for the two firms to merge. They needed a presence in Yorkshire and the West Midlands, and wanted to be more corporately managed."

The merger strengthens Dobb Lupton's hand in the North of England, bringing fee income of £22 million in the North West alone. Offices in

Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds and Sheffield are turning over £60 million between them. In London, the firm effectively doubles in size, hitting critical mass in areas such as corporate recovery, banking, and commercial litigation.

Further mergers are possible in London and in Birmingham — perceived as a weak link in the chain. Attempts will be made to boost the client base through expensive "lateral hires" — just as Benson was recruited from Turner Kenneth Brown. Knowles is keen to develop the firm internationally, building on Alsop's offices in Hong Kong and New York.

Knowles' ultimate goal is incorporation — ring-fencing Dobb Lupton in the same way that KPMG has isolated its audit practice. For tax reasons, the move cannot happen until 1999. For now, the firm will concentrate on expanding into areas such as human resources, insurance claims handling, and litigation support.

Knowles says: "There are a number of areas where we probably need to go higher up the food chain and get to the client before other forms of consultancies get to the client, and that is something that we are going to be developing. The merger, and the £100 million of fee income, gives us more scope to do that."

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ACCOUNTANCY

Faith, hope and charitable VAT

John Brown calls for a change in the application of VAT to release charities from an immense burden



John Brown says the rules are too complex for charities

It is once again the season of goodwill to all men, the season for giving and a season of faith: faith in the numerous charities that minister to those in need that they will not fail in their tasks while others enjoy festivities.

Although there may be a great outpouring of charitable works, the application of VAT to charities is somewhat less than charitable. For many charities, the incidence of irrecoverable VAT and the administration of the tax is a serious impediment. The monetary cost absorbs funds, often donated by the public without thought that an element will find its way to the Chancellor's coffers instead of being applied to the work of the charity, while the administration involves management resources that a charity can ill afford to provide.

In an earlier edition of the Customs and Excise leaflet on VAT and charities there was a warning that charities were bound by the same VAT requirements as any other business. It is a pity that this warning has been dropped, for in it was much truth. Perhaps it did not go far enough; charities are not only subject to all the rigours of VAT but with a degree of complexity unimaginable to business.

Charities are exposed to more of the intricacies of VAT than any other business sector. The VAT structure of a charity is like a tripod. One leg represents the supplies the charity makes, another the reliefs which may apply and the third the input tax it may recover. It must stand on all three legs represented by the entire range of VAT law — including the enforcement provisions from which there is no hiding place.

Supplies are a danger area; they can be made in almost infinite variety by charities. It is not only a matter of recognising them in the first place, but of determining their true VAT liability. The main and overwhelming supply by a charity in the caring sector may indeed be the exempt provision of care. If it did nothing else, it would have no exposure to VAT except to carry as a cost VAT on the major part of its bought-in costs. But life is not like that; charities do other things and make other supplies.

Projects may be instigated in a charity's far-flung operational units by local management committees whose knowledge of VAT is minimal. Payments to charities are frequently described as "grants"

when they are not; they are the taxable consideration for the supply of services.

A single charity may make supplies for consideration which include: transport by ambulance, first aid training for other voluntary organisations and for commercial ones, sales of products, the letting of surplus ground on

occasions, allowing a recycling business to place a skip on its land in return for a percentage of the value of waste paper dumped, the supply of accommodation, transport services in vehicles adapted for the handicapped, meals, the supply of staff, sales of goods on a 50-50 basis in charity shops, sale of donated goods and

"promises", sporting and grazing rights over land, consultancy services, sponsorship and advertising services, fundraising in variety, holiday accommodation, conference facilities and the exploitation of the charity's logo.

Now identify the correct VAT liability of the above examples as a Christmas afternoon occupation. Send your answers by fax on Christmas Day to HM Customs and Excise; they will not be at work but the charities will be incurring expenditure with minimal hope of recovering the VAT thereon.

Contemplate the complexity of the above and compare it with the relative simplicity of applying VAT to a commercial business which has the resources to cope and the funds to pay professional advisers.

There are many reliefs for charities in VAT law, but their complexity is legion. Charities deserve a better deal. The immense burden of irrecoverable VAT should be reduced or eliminated; charities provide relief and they too should be relieved of the ever-increasing burden of VAT cost and administration. Perhaps the season of goodwill is the time to start thinking along such lines. We shall then have faith, hope and unencumbered charities.

John Brown is immediate past president of the VAT Practitioners Group.

Year of teacakes and whoopee cushions

IT HAS been a year of extraordinary activity and achievements, though, as often happens with the accountancy profession, not all of it went as planned. It is odd to think that only 12 months ago people were still worrying about whether or not the English ICA would merge with CIMA, the management accounting body. The news that the merger had fallen through seems now to come from a different era.

In future, rationalisation within the accountancy profession is only likely to come about through disasters and one or more bodies running for cover to escape disasters. The other change we have now all taken on board is the idea that accountancy firms disclose financial information in the same way that companies have done since 1994. Only Price Waterhouse still stands alone, crossly refusing the idea. But even there, if you look at the latest edition of their in-house magazine, senior partner Ian Brindle is eager to trumpet achievements and growth. It cannot be long before even he produces some figures for the outside world.

But that is likely only after they have put together their US and European firms. Then we can expect mammoth disclosures of huge advances. Accountancy firms know the business of outstepping their competitors these days.

They also know the advantages of keeping their options open as we approach a general election. The goal of becoming limited liability partnerships will remain. The confusion as some go for Jersey, smaller firms go for the Isle of Man, and others hold on to see what the Government can offer in terms of an onshore UK limited liability partnership will continue. But the firms are doing well. They can cope with a degree of uncertainty. And in the long term, the prospect of some form of proportionate liability legislation is pretty certain.

The other members of the profession who must regard a coming general election with reasonable ease are the accountancy bodies. Despite squabbles over details, they have managed this year to put together a credible regulation system. It is still a plan rather than a done deal but that doesn't matter. If a Queen's Speech next year does contain proposals for new types of Securities and Exchange Commission to oversee the City and business, then the blueprint the profession has sorted out can easily be bolted on to any new structure. Even

on the theoretical front, accounting seems to have sorted itself out. The great onslaught, headed by Ernst & Young, against the Accounting Standards Board's published statement of principles ended in a state of reasonably happy compromise.

The head of the ASB, Sir David Tweedie, may have said that E&Y's pamphletising had "all the vision of a mole and the eloquence of a whoopee cushion" but accountants do in the end find agreement and compromise more congenial than bitter battles. The great divide over the issue of current values is still there, but it will not surface again for a while.

The world of taxation and that of VAT in particular provided some bizarre glimpses of the state of tax legislation and its surrounding legal battles. "The Marks & Spencer teacake decision" cost the Government over £360 million" was the sort of comment flying about. But it tended to detract from the main point. Talk of £6 billion shortfalls in tax take made headlines. But they did so only because of the distorted politics behind taxation policy. For a generation, the brightest and best from the Inland Revenue or Customs and Excise have jumped ship and earned much more working as advisers for professional firms. This is not really gamekeeper becoming poacher. The important point is the shift in the balance of expertise and ability. All the current statements from the tax authorities echo what the professional firms have been saying for years: cut back on staff but run the place with a core of brilliant tax people.

The problem for any government is that within the terms of pay that sort of objective cannot be achieved within the Civil Service. Only within the Civil Service. Only

accountancy and legal firms can achieve such goals. Tax authorities are condemned to lumbering along in the profession's wake. But probably the most hopeful change during the year has been the attitude towards financial reporting. There may be enormous problems ahead in trying to bring together global rules. But the collective understanding that figures to be disclosed cannot remain so long under wraps before publication is creating a tide of reform.

The more that companies want to put out figures to the market as close to real time as they can, the greater the pressure will be for more useful information to be produced faster and more accurately. Which is precisely what accountancy ought to be about.



ROBERT BRUCE

Brute force of PW founder

THESE days Christmas Eve is the day when even accountants stop working and start the Christmas break. But it was not always thus. On Christmas Eve in 1849 Samury Price opened up the partnership which we now know as Pricewaterhouse.

And that is why next Tuesday sees the annual founder's lunch of the current partners at their Southwark Towers

headquarters in London. Much jollity is expected. But we can only hope that they do not follow the example of their exalted founder.

Price liked nothing better during a lunch than to wade in with both fists if an argument needed to be settled. During the Fenian riots of the 1860s he turned up to the office in a very dishevelled and somewhat bloodstained con-

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

dition", it was reported. So be on the safe side and make sure you can avoid the precincts of London Bridge station next Tuesday evening.

Heavy words

SPARE a thought for the Christmas foreboding that has settled over members of the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC).

In its breakneck scamper to have its rules in order by early 1998 it has scheduled an extra meeting for January 6. This means that all IASC members are awaiting the third of an agenda on their doorsteps between Christmas and the new year. This leaves them only a week, at best, to sort out their views. And IASC agencies currently tend to weigh in at around the 1,500-page mark.

"A copy of War and Peace would be shorter" is the moan of many a member. And probably more understandable too.

Festive touch

SIR David Tweedie has been bringing Christmas cheer to the City this week. He has been spotted around London wearing a tie decorated with numerous jolly faces of Father Christmas on it. It must be something to do with the forthcoming standard on goodwill.

Court of Appeal

Judge was not told of change

Vernon v Bosley
Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Evans and Lord Justice Thorpe
[Judgment December 13]

When a civil case was conducted on the basis of evidence in relation to the plaintiff's psychiatric condition and the prognosis at the time of the trial, and it was discovered before judgment was delivered that the prognosis had changed significantly, the altered position should have been disclosed to the defendant and the trial judge.

The distinction between actively misleading and passively stating by and watching the court being misled did not apply if there was found to be an error in a material fact which was an essential part of the case. In such a case it was also the duty of a barrister to advise his client to make disclosure to the court, and if the client refused, to withdraw from the case.

The Court of Appeal so held by a majority. Lord Justice Evans dissented when reducing to £541,493.70 the damages plus interest payable to the plaintiff, Peter Fraser Vernon, by the defendant, Kathleen Sarah Bosley, after the rehearing of an appeal in which judgment had originally been delivered in March (The Times April 4).

The defendant's appeal was from a decision of Mr Justice Sedley given on January 30, 1995 whereby he awarded the plaintiff £1,332,231.59 by way of damages and interest in respect of nervous shock or psychiatric injury sustained when he witnessed on August 13, 1982, unsuccessful attempts to rescue his two daughters from a motor car which had been driven into a river in South Wales by the defendant, who was employed by the plaintiff and his wife as a nanny.

Mr Dermot O'Brien, QC and Mr Daniel Pearce-Higgins for the defendant; Mr David Blunt, QC and Mr Jonathan Marks, QC, for the plaintiff; Miss Diana Cotton, QC, as amicus curiae.

LORD JUSTICE STUART-SMITH said that the defendant never disputed negligence but disputed that the plaintiff had suffered post-traumatic stress disorder as opposed to a grief reaction, albeit an extreme one. She contended that the plaintiff's subsequent psychological problems were reactions to life events, unconnected with the accident, such as the loss of his business, his inability to obtain employment and the break up of his marriage.

On March 29, 1996 their Lordships handed down draft judgments reducing the total award of damages to £643,425.56. Issues then arose as to the correct calculation of past and future loss of earnings, which affected the calculation of interest.

No final order of the court had been drawn up when, on April 17, 1996, Mr O'Brien received from an anonymous sender through the post copies of a judgment of Judge

McNaught given on January 6, 1996 in Gloucester County Court in proceedings between the plaintiff and his wife relating to their three children, and a copy of a judgment dismissing the plaintiff's appeal against Judge McNaught's judgment. Those judgments revealed that the evidence before those courts was that the plaintiff's psychiatric health had drastically improved since September 1993 and that he was substantially, if not fully recovered.

That appeared to be the effect of the evidence of Dr G. L. Lloyd, a consultant psychiatrist, and Mr Douglas Mackay, a clinical psychologist, both of whom had given evidence before Mr Justice Sedley.

It appeared to the defendant's legal advisers that that evidence was materially different to the picture presented to Mr Justice Sedley and to the Court of Appeal and that in particular it might affect the judge's findings as to the plaintiff's state of health at the time of the judgment and the prognosis for the future. That would affect the level of general damages and also elements of future earnings.

Accordingly the defendant applied for the appeal to be listed for rehearing, for discovery and inspection of the relevant reports and evidence and for leave to take evidence. The defendant waived any objection and leave was granted.

Their Lordships ruled in October that further evidence should be admitted since it was relevant to the plaintiff's mental condition at the time of Mr Justice Sedley's judgment.

His Lordship said that it was only because the fresh evidence was likely to have a significant impact on the amount of the judge's award and their Lordships' award of damages that it was justifiable to admit it.

It could not possibly be a proper exercise of the court's discretion to reopen the appeal simply to give expert witnesses the opportunity to explain their evidence and the change that had come about in it.

From that evidence their Lordships concluded that the plaintiff had made a substantial recovery which had been progressive since September 1993 save for temporary deteriorations. While that could not be said to be a complete recovery because he required low level medication, it did not prevent him from functioning normally.

In his Lordships' judgment, the existence of Dr Lloyd's and Mr Mackay's later reports, notes of evidence and Judge McNaught's judgment should have been disclosed to the defendant's advisers before Mr Justice Sedley gave judgment.

His Lordship rejected the submission that the reports of Mr Mackay and Dr Lloyd were subject to litigation privilege. They were reports obtained from experts in proceedings under the Children Act 1989 and such reports were not privileged. The ratio decidendi of the case of *In re L (a Minor) (Police*

Investigation: Privilege) [1996] 2 WLR 395 was not confined to wardship and care proceedings.

It was the duty of every litigant not to mislead the court or his opponent. He might do so not only by giving evidence that he knew to be untrue, but by leading the court to believe that a certain state of affairs, which he once believed to be true, was now known no longer to be so. That duty continued until the judge had given judgment.

Moreover, the litigant did not discharge that duty simply by accepting his legal adviser's advice. He could rely on such advice as negating mens rea, so that he would not be guilty of the crime of attempting to pervert the course of justice. But he was responsible for incorrect advice vis-à-vis the other party to the civil litigation. That was the general rule where legal advisers were acting within the scope of their actual or ostensible authority.

In the submissions made on behalf of the plaintiff, reliance was placed on the evidence of both Mr Mackay and Dr Lloyd as to the plaintiff's current condition and prognosis. Yet at the same time the submissions were made the plaintiff knew that it did not represent the true position and shortly afterwards his legal advisers knew the same.

Unless the altered position was communicated to the judge there was clearly a risk that he would give judgment on a basis that was no longer true and that was exactly what happened.

Mr Blunt sought to rely on the distinction between actively misleading and passively standing by and watching the court be misled.

His Lordship said that the classic example of the distinction was the case where the barrister knew his client had previous convictions but the court and prosecution did not. He was not under an obligation to disclose the convictions but he must not suggest that his client was a man of good character.

Similarly, neither the litigant nor his lawyers were bound to call in a civil case those witnesses who could speak as to a certain matter of fact which they did not support their case.

But where the case had been conducted on the basis of certain material facts which were an essential part of the case, in this case the plaintiff's condition at the trial and the prognosis, which were discovered before judgment by the judge and their Lordships' award of damages, was being misled, not by the defendant's failure to put before it material of which she could or should have been aware, but by the failure of the plaintiff and his advisers to correct an incorrect appreciation which the court would otherwise have.

In regard to the duty of counsel, his Lordship said that there was a danger that the court would be misled. It was counsel's duty to advise his client that disclosure should be made.

Law Report December 19 1996

Six steps to jury inference

Regina v Argent
Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Sachs and Mr Justice Toulson
[Judgment December 16]

Six formal conditions had to be met before a jury could draw such inferences as appeared proper, under section 34 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, from the failure of a defendant in answer to a constable's questions under caution to mention any fact relied on in his defence in court.

The Court of Appeal so stated when dismissing an appeal by Brian Argent, aged 31, against conviction of manslaughter, having been acquitted of the murder of Tony Sullivan by stabbing him seven times outside an east London nightclub.

The trial took place before Sir Lawrence Verner, Recorder of London, and a jury at the Central Criminal Court last May, and the appellant was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. An appeal against sentence was dismissed.

Section 34 of the 1994 Act provides: "(1) Where, in any proceedings against a person for an offence, evidence is given that the accused — (a) at any time before he was charged with the offence, on being questioned under caution by a constable trying to discover whether or by whom the offence had been committed, failed to mention any fact relied on in his defence in those proceedings ...

being a fact which in the circumstances existing at the time the accused could reasonably have been expected to mention when so questioned ... subsection (2) below applies.

"(2) When this subsection applies ... (a) the jury in determining whether the accused is guilty of the offence charged, may draw such inferences from the failure as appear proper ..."

The LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, said that section 34(2)(a) empowered the jury to draw inferences from the failure to mention facts as they appeared proper. That had to mean as appeared proper for a jury because the jury was the tribunal of fact and the drawing of appropriate inferences from facts was the task of the tribunal of fact.

The trial judge was, of course, responsible for the overall fairness of the trial and it was open to him to give the jury guidance on the approach to the evidence. There would certainly be circumstances in which a judge could warn a jury against drawing inferences.

The judge had always to bear in mind that the jury was the tribunal of fact and Parliament in its wisdom had seen fit to enact section 34.

The formal conditions to be met

before the jury could draw such inferences were six.

- 1 There had to be proceedings against a person for an offence. That condition had necessarily to be satisfied before section 34 could bite.
- 2 The alleged failure had to occur before a defendant was charged.
- 3 The alleged failure had to occur during questioning under caution by a constable, or any other person within section 34(4).
- 4 The questioning had to be directed to trying to discover whether or by whom the alleged offence had been committed.

In the present case, it was not in doubt that the victim had been killed by someone, and the questioner was trying to discover who inflicted the fatal wound and whether the killing was murder or manslaughter. It being fairly clear that the offence must have been one or the other unless the killer struck the fatal blow in the course of defending himself.

5 The alleged failure by the defendant had to be to mention any fact relied on in his defence in those proceedings. That raised two questions of fact: (a) Was there some fact which the defendant had relied on in his defence? (b) Did the jury have evidence that the defendant had failed to mention any fact relied on in his defence in those proceedings? Being questions of fact they were for the jury as the tribunal of fact to resolve.

6 The fact the appellant failed to mention was a fact which, in the

circumstances existing at the time, he could reasonably have been expected to mention when so questioned.

The relevant time was the time of questioning and account had to be taken of all the relevant circumstances existing at that time.

The court should not construe the expression "in the circumstances" restrictively; matters such as time of day, the defendant's age, experience, mental capacity, state of health, sobriety, freshness, personality and legal advice were all part of the relevant circumstances. Those were only examples of the things which might be relevant.

When reference was made to the accused, attention was directed not to some hypothetical reasonable accused of ordinary fortitude but to the actual accused with such qualities, knowledge, apprehensions and advice as he was shown to have had at the time.

Like so many other questions in criminal trials the questions were for the jury to resolve in the exercise of their common sense, experience and understanding of human nature.

His Lordship, having reviewed the facts particular to the case and the grounds of appeal, said that the court did not regard the conviction as unsafe and the appeals against conviction and sentence were dismissed.

Solicitors: Attridge, Bermard, Solicitors; Crown Prosecution Service, Headquarters.

Judge's powers when reviewing taxation

Kawarindrasingh v White
Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Brooke
[Judgment November 5]

A judge who was reviewing a taxation of a litigant in person's costs had the same powers and discretion as were vested in the taxing officer or district judge and he was not limited to inquiring whether the taxation was unreasonable.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing an application by the plaintiff, Li Col S. Kawarindrasingh, for leave to appeal against the refusal of Judge Morrell at Peterborough County Court on October 25, 1994 to interfere with a taxation of costs by a district judge.

The appeal was allowed and the matter was remitted to the county court for rehearing.

The plaintiff in person: the defendant did not appear and was not represented.

LORD JUSTICE BROOKE said that the plaintiff had sought a review of the judge's district judge's taxation of his costs.

The judge had considered that he was bound by the decision of a two-judge division of the Court of Appeal in *Hart v Aga Khan Foundation (UK)* [1984] 1 WLR

994 to decide the review in accordance with the principles set out in *Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd v Wednesbury Corporation* [1948] 1 KB 223.

He reviewed the order on that basis and decided that the district judge had not had regard to any irrelevant considerations or failed to take into account relevant considerations and it could not be said that his opinion was clearly wrong.

The judge was aware of the fact that in *Madurasingh v Penguin Electronics* [1993] 1 WLR 989 Lord Justice McCowan had suggested that the decision in *Hart*'s case might require reconsideration on some future occasion, but the judge had said that since the present case was a taxation of the costs of a litigant in person he was bound by *Hart* which also concerned a litigant in person.

At the heart of the application for leave to appeal was an issue of considerable public importance relating to the nature of a judge's jurisdiction when he or she heard an application for a review of taxation, made pursuant to Order 38, rule 24(4) of the County Court Rules (SI 1981 No 1057 (L20)), by a party who was dissatisfied with the district judge's decision on a reconsideration of a taxation.

Order 38, rule 24(6) provided that on such an application the judge could "exercise all such powers and discretion as are vested in the district judge in relation to the subject matter of the application".

In his Lordships' judgment, Order 38, rule 24(6) reproduced in a codified form the familiar principles which governed the jurisdiction of a judge on an interlocutory appeal from a master or district judge, which were clearly set out by Lord Atkin in *Evans v Bartlam* [1937] AC 473, 478:

"where there is a discretionary jurisdiction given to the court or a judge the judge in chambers is in no way fettered by the previous exercise of the master's discretion ... he is entitled to exercise [his discretion] as though the matter came before him for the first time."

The present application provided appropriate occasion for the court to resolve any doubts which might still linger on the nature of a judge's jurisdiction on an application to review a taxation of costs, whether made by a taxing officer or by a district judge, and whether made by a firm of solicitors or a litigant in person under Order 62, rule 38(4) of the Rules of the Supreme Court, or under Order 38, rule 24(6) of the County Court

Rules whose words were identical, mutatis mutandis, so far as the provisions relating to the judge's powers and discretion were concerned.

The words, as Lord Justice McCowan had said in *Madurasingh*, meant exactly what they said.

In his Lordships' judgment, the judge below had been wrong, as a matter of law, to hold that his jurisdiction was limited to an inquiry as to whether the district judge's order could be faulted on Wednesbury grounds, although in the light of the apparently conflicting decisions of the Court of Appeal it was hardly surprising that he decided to follow what was said in *Hart* which was another case concerned with a litigant in person, particularly as *The County Court Practice 1996* drew attention to that distinction.

The Court of Appeal did not have the expertise, in the absence of expert assistance, to determine that the plaintiff's application for a review was doomed to fail.

Accordingly, the court would grant leave to appeal, allow the appeal and remit the plaintiff's application for a review to the judge on the proper basis.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Aldous agreed.

Equities close near best of day

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company	Price	%	Div	PE
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
BANKS				
Bank of America	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of England	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of France	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Germany	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Italy	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Japan	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Korea	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Mexico	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Netherlands	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Norway	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Portugal	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Spain	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Sweden	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Switzerland	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Taiwan	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Thailand	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of United Kingdom	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of USA	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Vietnam	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Yugoslavia	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Zambia	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Bank of Zimbabwe	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
BEVERAGES, FOODS & REST				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
ENGINEERING VEHICLES				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
FOOD MANUFACTURERS				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
BUILDING & CONSTRUCT				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
ELECTRONICS & ELECT				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
HEALTHCARE				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
INSURANCE				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Orkla	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Sanofi	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Stout	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Unilever	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Wm. & Wm.	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
INVESTMENT TRUSTS				
Beck's	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Carlsberg	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Heineken	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Interbrew	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
King	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
Miller	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
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Quilley	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
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Thorn	1.12	0.0	0.00	15.0
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1970



10

1990



FILM 1

Frenetic action, an unrelenting soundtrack... and Madonna: *Evita* proves to be all lung and no heart



FILM 2

...but, with Danny DeVito in top form, *Matilda* is a gleeful screen adaptation of Roald Dahl's story

THE TIMES ARTS



FILM 3

...and the delightful 1964 Michel Legrand musical. *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, is back



TOMORROW

The amazing return of Peter Green: Fleetwood Mac's founder tells of his journey to hell and back

CINEMA: Madonna emotes her little cotton socks off, but Geoff Brown is deafened rather than stirred by *Evita*

Desperately seeking earplugs

Something is wrong with a musical when you keep hoping everyone will shut up. In the film version of *Evita* there is very little silence. Just a few seconds appear here and there before Madonna's Evita, or Antonia Banderas, her Everyman partner, launch into song, or the crowds in the square shout in jubilation, or the army of electric guitars make war on the soundtrack.

We long for pools of contemplation, to ponder the progress of this Eva Duarte from rural Argentine urchin to glamorous, spotlight-begging wife of the dictator Juan Domingo Perón. But there is simply no time. There is always a dance number to stage, a riot to ignite, or a fancy set to bombard with camera angles. And a star who demands attention like a spoilt child.

Did it have to be this way? In some ways, yes. Andrew Lloyd Webber's rock opera, originally created in 1976 as a concept record album, is through-composed, and the film does nothing to alter that. Lloyd Webber's notes, allied to Tim Rice's frequently banal lyrics, keep on coming; and it will take a hardened fan of the show — there are plenty, I

know — to survive over two hours of impassioned mediocrity.

The choice of director also means this *Evita* had to be the way it is. Alan Parker does not walk on tip-toe. He wears loud, patterned boots; he puns and pokes, right from the start. The start is dated 1952: News of Eva Perón's death interrupts a movie screening. Then comes the funeral. Massed mourners line the streets; a chorus wails "Requiem aeternam"; a fat climax, after only a few minutes. So it goes on at the same furious pitch as the story backtracks to Evita's youth, her association with tango singer Magaldi (Jimmy Nail), and her ascent into the heart and bed of Colonel, later President, Perón (Jonathan Pryce).

This is history as rock opera. Complex events and characters get reduced to a trite narrative: a peasant girl gets rich and powerful and then, poor thing, she dies. Characters rarely interact, with each other or us; they declaim to the camera, or, more precisely, they mime to the thunderous soundtrack recording. To be sure, there is excitement in the sumptuous orchestral mix and Parker's barrage of images. There is passion and commitment in Madonna's performance, especially when she stands on the balcony, arms outstretched, singing *Don't Cry for Me, Argentina*.

But there is no intimacy, no tenderness, no time for reflection, no variety; everything is thumped home at the same level, everything is presented as spectacle. You may be dazzled, here and there. But you learn nothing. More importantly, you feel nothing.

Oddly enough, *Evita* arrives in the same week as *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, Jacques Demy's wonderful musical of 1964, restored and revived in all its pastel-hued splendour. Demy's characters



She loves you, and hopes you love her: the late, great Eva Perón achieves her goal of being played by Madonna

keep on singing too; every morsel of dialogue comes gift-wrapped with Michel Legrand's lilting pop music. But they sing to each other, and they sing of intimate, ordinary things that touch the heart: a lover absent in the Algerian war; a pregnancy, "badinage among garage workers, even

directions to a paint shop. There are real people here, sharing feelings in a world we can grasp and understand.

Of course there is artifice in plenty. Gaze at the colours: the yellow cardigan of Catherine Deneuve, or the turquoise dress with purple flowers that just happens to match the

wallpaper; or the umbrellas in the shop owned by Deneuve's mother, Anne Vernon.

But the artifice, never stifling, has a point. By painting Cherbourg in fairy-tale hues, Demy and his talented colleagues are creating a romantic dream against which the characters' disappointments

must be measured. Deneuve — achingly beautiful, and all of 19 at the time of shooting — gets pregnant by Nino Castelnuovo's garage hand, only to lose him to time and fate. In his absence, a rich diamond merchant (Marc Michel) makes his bid, and succeeds. Castelnuovo returns

to his own substitute marriage. Such is life, pretty colours or no.

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg has so many ingredients that most modern films have no interest in gathering. It has a sense of proportion and an integrated style: the thought of bombarding the viewer with theme-park attractions never struck Demy, his designer Jean Rabier, or his art director Bernard Evein. The film has genuine charm, and a wistful brand of sentiment with enough specks of vinegar to stop things curdling into mush. Handsomely restored after circulating for too long in faded prints, it is the connoisseur's No 1 Christmas attraction.

You villainous sack of golems! "You squirming worm of vomit!" This is Roald Dahl-speak, and there is enough of the master's boisterous anarchy and language left in the film of *Matilda* to delight his young fans. Since this is an American adaptation, the story has been shifted to California, where we find Mara Wilson's precocious young heroine suffering under the thumb of two crass, self-regarding parents.

Father (Danny DeVito, who also directs) touches up wrecked cars and sells them to suckers. Mother (Rhea Perlman) is concerned only with her looks. So what if *Matilda*'s IQ reaches the stratosphere? Father knows best: "There's nothing you can't get from a book that you can't get from television faster!"

Observations like that appeal to adults. Other elements in the mix are more designed for a child's guffaws. Take Miss Trunchbull, the fearsome headmistress of Crunchem Hall, played by our own Pam Ferris. Trunchbull snarls out her insults, flexes her whip, and is strong enough to grab a child by the pigtail and hurl her far and wide. Luckily,

young audiences know that the bigger the crime, the bigger the comeuppance; and when it comes, DeVito does not disappoint.

No film could be further removed from the blandness of most family entertainment. Wilson, the appealing young player from *Miracle on 34th Street*, may smile sweetly, but she's not the kind of moppet who causes a wince. As director, DeVito keeps the visuals edgy, and the tone one of gleeful exaggeration. You cannot make a successful Dahl adaptation without some mischief, and this delightful, prancing film has it in spades.

'Too much music'

Young film fans give their thoughts on...

Michelle Robertson, 22: Perhaps too much of the musical side, with an evident lack of direction in places. Still, you'll be guaranteed to leave your seat singing *Don't Cry for Me, Argentina*.
Azzazel Chapman, 21: Good acting but, all in all, your typical banal Lloyd Webber musical.
Lorena Rowell, 20: A spectacular but sentimental production in which Madonna and Antonio Banderas perform well.
Léanne Rose, 22: As with most Lloyd Webber musicals there comes a point in the second half when all the songs sound exactly the same. *Don't Cry for Me* became especially irritating when Madonna started on her fourth rendition.

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DANCE

Tchaikovsky all the way: English and Russian versions of *The Nutcracker* compete in London

THEATRE

Rocking the boat nicely: the National Theatre revives its fine staging of *Gyps and Dolls*

THE TIMES ARTS

MUSIC

Judith Weir and other contemporary composers jostle with the greats in an intriguing touring programme

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Rival Nutcrackers offer sweet contrasts

DANCE: Debra Craine on the battle in London between English and Russian stagings of Tchaikovsky's classic

Christmas is the season of *Nutcrackers*, and London has two giants to choose from. On Monday English National Ballet opened its annual run at the Festival Hall, where its productions of the Yuletide classic have played to more than three million people since 1952, making it one of the most durable traditions in 20th-century ballet. Then on Tuesday at the Coliseum came the heavyweight foreigners, the Kirov, unveiling their St Petersburg *Nutcracker*, a grandchild of the original Maryinsky Theatre production from 1892.

The English *Nutcracker* is as pretty as a German Christmas card, twinkling snow carpeting the branches outside the Stahlbaum's solid middle-class home. Inside, Desmond Heeley's handsome set suggests cosy family get-togethers and festive high spirits.

Ben Stevenson's choreography does the job well enough in Act I's party scene. But once Clara and her Nutcracker Prince are transported to the Land of Snow,

imagination moves up a notch. A flurry of lively formations for the corps de ballet of Snowflakes frames an attractive Torvill and Dean-tuned routine for the Prince and the Snow Queen.

Act II honours belong to Heeley, though, whose flying pastry chefs wittily animate the Kingdom of Sweets. Stevenson's choreographic language doesn't match the setting for sparkle. But then, neither did ENB's opening-night cast, led by Lisa Parnes's Sugar Plum Fairy, Greg Horsman's Prince and Daria Kirova's Snow Queen, offer much more than efficiency in dancing it.

This is ENB's farewell to the Festival Hall. Next December it will cross the Thames to the Coliseum with a new *Nutcracker* by Derek Deane.

The Kirov, meanwhile, is still performing Vainonen's 1934 pro-

duction, with later designs by Simon Virsaladze. This is a world far removed from the relaxed bonhomie of the ENB staging. The Kirov Stahlbaums are seriously upper-class, ensconced in a blue blood's grand residence, with elegant architectural detailing and the finest of French furniture.

The children are well-behaved (much older, too), and regimented into formal dances, while their parents wear powdered wigs and the latest Napoleonic fashions. There is nothing remotely "old German town" about Virsaladze's effusively aristocratic vision in pink. Yet as a period piece it holds a certain fascination.

The Russians present their *Nutcracker* in three acts, with Mascha's dream (or Clara, as she is known in Western stagings) standing alone as an act in itself. The transformation scene unfolds so-

danelly and lacks the magic we have come to expect, while the Kingdom of Sweets has been replaced by Fairyland, a sunlit garden of sumptuous botanical delights (a fantasy every bit as alluring as a chocolate box in the middle of a Russian winter).

Vainonen's production borrows too freely from Petipa and Ivanov, the great choreographers of Imperial Russia. The snow scene is straight out of Act II of *Swan Lake*. Ivanov's sublime poetry reiterated in the rows of feathery turned snowflakes — a stirring moment for the corps de ballet almost ruined by the clump, clump, clump of heavy Russian pointe shoes on the Coliseum stage.

And the grand pas de deux, usually the exclusive province of the Sugar Plum Fairy (here called the Princess) and the Nutcracker Prince, turns into a reprise of

Petipa's Rose Adagio from *The Sleeping Beauty*, with the ballerina passing from partner to partner in a display of poised balances.

Diana Vishneva was the opening night Princess, a sweet dancer with a ready smile and one of the new young faces of the Kirov. Ultra-alm and long-limbed, she typifies the kind of dancer Oleg Vinogradov has encouraged in recent years — sapped of strength in the lower body but endowed with generous breadth in the upper body. Her Prince was Farouk Ruzimatov, shorn of his extraordinary looks these days and looking more than a little humbled by the passing years. Elsewhere in the cast, alarm bells were sounding that the fabled Kirov technique is being sacrificed to Vinogradov's aesthetic dogma. Some of the spindly-legged dancers looked virtually anorexic.

The Kirov is accompanied by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia, which gave a rich and agile account of Tchaikovsky's score under Kirov conductor Boris Gruzin.



The Kirov *Nutcracker* at the Coliseum evokes a formal world far removed from ENB's relaxed Festival Hall production



Imelda Staunton, Henry Goodman, Clarke Peters and Joanna Riding in Richard Eyre's exhilarating *Gyps and Dolls*

Loesser is more

Will Richard Eyre's revival of *Gyps and Dolls* prove as great a boon for the National Theatre and its audiences as his original production of the show at the same address 14 years ago? Don't ask silly questions. Those on the politically severe margins may object to the Runyonesque cross-talk — "If a guy don't have a doll, who's gonna yell at him? A doll is a necessity" — but they can stay at home with their sofa-bean roasts and boiled-water cocktails. Those with a bit of festivity in their spirits can corner the fun.

Frank Loesser's musical is preposterously good-natured. It is a tale of warm-hearted gamblers and well-meaning Salvationists which has for its hero a warm-hearted gambler

who becomes a well-meaning Salvationist. Off goes Sky Masterson to Havana with the earnest young tub-thumper, Sarah Brown, winning \$1,000 by pulling the most unlikely doll in New York. But the agreeable paradox is, of course, that he also wins her and she wins him. John Guter fills the vast Olivier stage with the sort of sets it needs and too seldom gets: not just skyscrapers, but neon lights advertising everything from gam to Scotch, tiny kiosks, a dowdy bar and a grotty canteen offering (this being the 1950s) a French roast for 10 cents.

But it is the human decor that really matters, and that means hoods in mauve, coral,

turquoise suits, and chorus girls dressed as anything from leathery hens to comically undulating socialites. The choreography, down to a nightclub tango that evolves into a riot, is sharper and more accomplished than I recall it being in 1982. The principals do well, too. Clarke Peters is a wry, cool Sky who exudes easy charm, and Joanna Riding a sweet and serious Sarah capable of jumping, kicking and even tapping with the best of them. But, as always, it is the subplot that proves the most fun. Back in 1982 Bob Hoskins was the gamester Nathan Detroit and Julia Mackenzie the fiancée who has waited to marry him for a decade and a half.

Now the duo are Henry Goodman and Imelda Staunton. He has the nervy, driven quality of a guy who must simultaneously organise an illegal crap-game, please Chicago gangsters, and convince his doll he is doing neither. She is a wonderful, wiggling blend of self and troll, hilarious but touching as, in a celebrated song, she describes the unwed scene, in terms of colds, coughs, flu and hypochondriac symptoms galore. But then so many numbers are so witty and so hummable. After *A Bushel and a Peck* comes *I've Never Been in Love Before*, and after *Luck Be a Lady* comes a rendering of *Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat* rousing led by Clive Rowe. Is there a more exhilarating show on offer this yuletide? If so, I don't know it.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE
This review appeared in later editions of *The Times* yesterday

LONDON CONCERTS

Good, evil and whoops of joy

BCM/G/Harding
QEH

Three works of the last decade, framed by a pair of 20th-century classics, formed the attractive programme given by the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group at the Queen Elizabeth Hall as part of a Contemporary Music Network tour.

The concert opened with an account of Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro* that spotted Robert Johnson's virtuosity on the harp more than usual. But the iridescent play of colours in that score is arguably served no less well by such crystalline clarity than by the traditional shimmering impressionistic haze, and that immediacy prepared us well for what was to follow.

Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Kai* is a requiem for Kai

Scheffer, the German cellist who died in 1989. Its elegiac cast is the product of two contrasting strains: a poignant cello cantabile (played eloquently by Ulrich Heinen) and a jazz element provided by two saxophones, bass guitar and drum kit.

Those counteractive features were held in skilful

equilibrium by Daniel Harding, directing a fine performance by these accomplished players. David Lang's *My Evil Twin* is said by its composer explicitly to embody the interaction of opposing impulses, good and bad (hence the title). "Happy melodies" supposedly struggle against "angry walls of

sound", but to these ears there was little distinction between the two types of incessant ostinati.

A model of how to prevent motive ideas outstaying their welcome is provided by Judith Weir's miniature opera *The Consolations of Scholarship*. Drawing on Chinese sources and to some extent the style of the ancient Yuan drama, the work is exemplary in its economical handling of means to expressive ends.

From a pool of a mere nine instruments, an oboe and a clarinet combine in a sinuous melody that is the distilled essence of the alluring but implacable face of the Orient. Another scene incorporates a patter song and a dialogue, complete with conspiratorial asides — all delivered by the admirable Mary King, whose striking of mock-horror attitudes provided all the staging needed.

The performance of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No 1 that followed not only completed the symmetry of the programme, but also brought it to an extraordinary end. The way Harding and his players integrated the late Romantic aspects (redolent of Wagner's *Siegfried* idyll at times) with the more rigorous contrapuntal discourse in their surging, impulsive account, was quite remarkable. The conclusion was greeted with spontaneous whoops of joy. Even the players looked exhilarated.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Songs with Slavonic soul

Galina Gorchakova
Wigmore Hall

FOLLOWERS of Galina Gorchakova, who loyally traced her every anguished breath through *Vissi d'arte* in Tosca at Covent Garden recently, were honoured with an action replay. *Billie's First* reviews Puccini's aria was the inevitable encore at the end of an otherwise entirely Russian programme. No less inevitable, perhaps, were the signs of fatigue shown by the Siberian soprano as she packed the obligatory recital into her busy schedule of international operatic engagements.

She certainly garnered every atom of her strength for the occasion. The determination and sheer physical overdrive that a singer of her breed and training can muster in *extremis* is formidable: so is the finely tuned support of her feisty accompanist Larissa Gergieva. But what we heard was that extraordinary explosion of resonance which is Gorchakova's head voice at its loudest — and which seems an emanation of her body and soul, and a haunting, characteristically smoky half-voice in the lower register. The gear changes, and the area in between, seemed eucoriated.

But this was not all we heard. Gorchakova is still young, yet her artistry is remarkably mature. The listener can forgive and forget vocal shortcomings when the singer makes such a deep and complete experience of a song like Tchaikovsky's *He Loved Me So*. From the subtle ambi-

guity within her first declaration — "No, I did not love him", Gorchakova created a miniature dramatic scene out of the song.

Gorchakova's skill as a recitalist also told in the cunning pacing of two, semi-murmured opening songs by Glazunov, followed by a slow crescendo of intensity, complete with eloquent body language, into the reflective settings of Grechaninov, and on to Tchaikovsky. In between came a little song about a fountain by Taneyev, a welcome shaft of sunlight in an evening of relentless Slavonic introspection.

Anton Rubinstein's *Melody* found its verbal support in poetry by Ramadze, just as his piano piece *Night* was later furnished with words by Pushkin; and Gergieva clearly enjoyed them as much as Gorchakova. Her contribution to the lighter, salon miniatures of Cesar Cui showed just what an exceptional accompanist she is, filling in their seemingly insignificant brushstrokes with the highest art.

But this was not all we heard. Gorchakova is still young, yet her artistry is remarkably mature. The listener can forgive and forget vocal shortcomings when the singer makes such a deep and complete experience of a song like Tchaikovsky's *He Loved Me So*. From the subtle ambi-

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CHANGING TIMES

Wily silly Willie

RADIO

IT WAS a voice that resonated with authority on the edge of desperation and it was, above all, unmistakable. Therefore the voice of Willie Rushon was made for radio, and much of the radio broadcasting he did seemed made for him.

Rushon the man died last week, but Rushon the broadcaster was still alive last Saturday and again on Monday of this week, when Radio 4 correctly went ahead with the broadcast (and the repeat) of the last in the present series of *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*.

The genius of Rushon was that he could be brilliantly silly, which is the point of the programme itself. This is the best comedy in all of radio, a half-hour of pointless verbal gymnastics, combining revue, satire and seaside double entendre in a grand tradition that goes back to *JTMA* and *The Goon Show*.

Ostensibly a panel game, *I'm Sorry* is chaired by Humphrey Lyttelton: when the word urbane entered the lan-

PETER BARNARD

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Dec 23-Jan 4 (including Sat evenings). Whitehall Theatre. *Cash On Delivery*. £10 (normally £22). Tel 0171-369 1735

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A passion deeply implanted in the human breast

Roger Scruton examines the link between hunting and the life of the countryside

This is a curious book, latest in a long tradition of curious books, from Isaac Walton's *Complete Angler* to Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*, dedicated to the rural pursuits of eccentric Englishmen. Some of the most imaginative prose in the English language has emerged from this tradition — witness Surtees, Trollope and T. H. White: there is no doubt that our perception of the English countryside and its meaning has been shaped beyond measure by those who have tried to capture in words the mysterious joys of hunting, shooting and fishing.

The sportsman, unlike the farmer, looks on the countryside as an end in itself rather than a means of profit. His soul runs out into woods and streams and fields with the untroubled joy of a child and around his immediate aim of catching fish, fowl or fox there grows a passionate love of the natural world, a sense of his own situation within it, and a vivid attachment to a place and a time.

Those are the feelings that Laurence Catlow tries to convey in this diary of his sporting year in Cumbria, where he is resident Classics master at a minor public school. It is the work of a very un-modern person, with a romantic attitude to nature. The diary gives

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOOTING FISHING MAN

By Laurence Catlow
Merlin Unwin Books, £17.99
ISBN 1 85354 24 4

no evidence whatsoever of human relationships, other than those which are the normal lot of an old-fashioned bachelor schoolmaster. Apart from wine and fives, Catlow's emotions are entirely expended on the natural world, which he describes with the same conviction of its miraculous and consoling character as an Edward Thomas or a Richard Jefferies.

His detailed and loving descriptions of fishing are particularly good, and will be a joy to anyone who shares his passion. His defiant celebration of the act of killing fish and birds in quantities that far surpass his gastronomic capacity may lose him a few readers. But he makes quite clear that they are not the readers he would want. If you are looking for a Christmas present for a friend who shoots or fishes, then you need look no further than this book.



Distinguishing between the values of human and animal life: hunters in Scotland with their kill

But Catlow has another and deeper purpose, besides that of sharing his sporting pleasures. He is a pious Catholic, who believes in an absolute distinction between human and animal life. It is, in his view, not just wrong but in some way sinful to extend to animals the protection afforded to people, and to behave as though animals had some absolute right to life and

liberty of the God-given kind that we enjoy. He is therefore deeply vexed by the new urban morality that seeks to forbid us from killing animals, or from taking pleasure in the warm pursuit of them.

I do not share Catlow's passion for shooting and fishing, although I find nothing strange in the fact that these activities should be the high point of someone's life, and the

object of powerful religious feelings. I think he is right, and there is no sound moral reason for condemning most normal field sports. But I wonder how many opponents would be persuaded by his approach, depending as it does on religious and metaphysical convictions which are, for the mass of urban people, no longer available? Catlow himself has some difficulty

in reconciling his tender feelings towards his dog with a philosophy that denies that a dog is capable of either understanding such feelings or returning them.

The issue is an important one, for two reasons. First, the life of our countryside — both wildlife and human life — is intimately bound up with the hunting of wild animals. Any attempt to forbid hunting will unravel centuries of careful management, and destroy both the social and the natural ecology of our landscape. Secondly, there are many people who either don't see this, or don't care about it, or who are so deeply opposed to killing (or at least to the killing of certain species in certain ways) that they are happy to encourage adverse legislation and to let the future look after itself.

The Labour Party expressly condones angling, an activity which Catlow's vivid descriptions show to involve intense and long-drawn-out suffering. But it promises, with characteristic inconsistency, "a free vote to ban hunting". This interesting piece of Newspeak presumably means a vote in which Labour MPs are free to vote according to their conscience, provided their conscience favours a ban. As someone

who hunts, I know, as clearly as I know the axioms of Set Theory or the themes of the Beethoven symphonies, that hunting with hounds is the kindest way of controlling foxes, and the best way to achieve a *modus vivendi* with this endearing pest. I therefore regard with alarm the prospect of a Parliament whose members are as ignorant of this issue as they are of virtually everything else, pronouncing my sport to be a crime. For then I should be, for the first time in my life, obliged by my conscience to become a criminal.

Surely, however, the correct response to all this is not to fall back on a religious philosophy which few MPs believe in, but to protest against the dangers of legislation designed to impose majority attitudes on law-abiding minorities. Outside the lunatics of the animal rights movement, there are few British people who believe that the test of a crime should be the strength of the feeling opposed to it — especially when the opposition is based in ignorance and self-deception. Meanwhile, I sincerely hope that Catlow's thought-provoking book will awaken those who shoot and fish to the danger that they too will face, should intransigent sentimentality succeed in outlawing the sport of kings.

Enoch Powell analyses a biblical translation

The earth was welter and waste

The professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California at Berkeley has published a fresh English translation of the Book of Genesis. It is primarily concerned to reproduce as far as possible the quality of the original Hebrew, the author having rejected the option of ignoring certain characteristics of biblical Hebrew in favour of modern English usage.

Biblical Hebrew presents an event as a sequence of separate items tied together with "and", whereas English style narrates by means of subordinate clauses. Alter believes that there is a positive gain in avoiding the self-contained compact sentences upon which English insists; and he displays the different effect of Hebrew's linked sentences connected by "and".

The English translator has to confront the repeated question whether the ubiquitous additive particle is to be represented at all in translating word-for-word a text which

GENESIS Translation and Commentary

By Robert Alter

Norton, £18.95

ISBN 0 393 03981 1

has no English affinity. There is no doubt that the normal English translation falsifies the impact of this survival from an older world and changes the tempo, style and construction of events to that extent. "Such a literary style is composed of very small elements as well as larger structural features: an English translator must confront the pesky question of whether the ubiquitous particle that means 'and' should be represented at all in translation." The parallel syntax and the barrage of 'ands', far from being the reflex of a 'primitive' language, are as artfully effective in furthering the ends of the narrative as any device one could find in a sophisticated modern novelist.

Biblical Hebrew itself was a language in process of creation and the author claims to distinguish between the earlier and later parts of Genesis in a work which spans both the pre-exilic and the post-exilic periods. He even insists on reproducing a Hebrew pun, Adam, with Adama, "earth". "We cannot be free," Alter protests, "to translate a word here one way and there another; but neither can we insist upon reproducing a Hebrew pun and rendering Adam as 'soil'."

Perhaps after all we should rest content to treat the King James (Tyndale) Genesis as an event in its own right, for all its failure to represent perfectly the characteristics of the Hebrew original. It had its own effect upon the English language of its day — indeed, or the present day.

Alter's translation makes the book essentially a tool for better comprehension of the Hebrew, a function which is enhanced by the footnotes attached to the actual translation. Wherever the reader is likely to be confronted by a puzzle, he will generally find it interpreted in an explanatory footnote. In fact, the translation could be useful in its own right, apart from the light which it casts upon the difficulties, as an assistance in the process of translation itself.

I will leave the last word, however, to the translator: "Although Genesis looks forward to its sequel, it stands as a book, inviting our attention as an audience that follows the tale from beginning to end."



Adam and Eve Banished from Paradise by Masaccio (1401-28). In Florence

Belief in a new kind of God

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke

THE JUNG CULT

Origins of a Charismatic Movement

By Richard Noll

Fontana Press, £7.99

ISBN 0 00 686365 5

The quasi-religious character of Jungian psychoanalysis has long been recognised in contrast to the more empirical practice of clinical psychology. Richard Noll extends this view by relating Jung's early intellectual development to the neo-Romantic intellectual climate of German *fin-de-siècle* culture, when notions of decline and decadence were matched by calls for rebirth and renewal. During the period 1890-1933 Germany witnessed a variety of elite societies dedicated to this spiritual project. It is Noll's thesis that Jungian psychoanalysis represented such a movement within this counterculture.

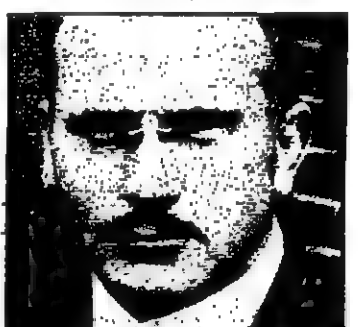
A faltering belief in Christian orthodoxy found ready substitutes in spiritualism and modern occultism, chiefly represented by Theosophy. Noll documents Jung's involvement with spiritualism and his familiarity with Theosophical works, which were an important inspiration and source of his knowledge of Gnosticism, astrology and ancient Hellenic religions.

Jung borrowed the evolutionary biologist Ernst Haeckel's theory that the stages of individual development recapitulated the evolutionary theory of the unconscious: fantasies and dreams recorded the prehistoric and ancient religious experience of mankind. Armed with the literature of cults, in 1909 Jung set about excavating the unconscious of his patients in the light of ancient mystery religions, symbols and rituals.

Meanwhile he was receptive to other contemporary trends: these include the free love gospel of the Ascoman anarchists and the Aryan myth, neopaganism and solar mysticism of the *volksisch* German nationalists. If Jung initially had regarded the eruption of these unconscious strata of the mind as a pathology, by 1916 he believed that the conscious mind could only be revitalised by cutting through the regressive Christian overlay of European civilisation to the archaic pre-Christian levels below.

Jung soon began to think of psychoanalysis as a new religious sect for the revival of Western culture with himself as its charismatic high priest. Following exten-

sive study of the ancient Aryan-Mithraic cult, Jung had a vivid dream in late 1913 in which he was transformed into the lion-headed god called Aion. This direct experience of divine transience, combined with Aryan solar mysticism,



Jung: inspired by the occult

provided Jung with a model for a cult based on his own brand of analysis (ritual) and resultant individuation (initiation).

In a final part of the book Noll describes the successful growth of the Jungian movement into an international institution outside academe and the medical establishment consistent with this model. Given the towering stature of Jung as a holy man to present practitioners and devotees, they will mostly be astonished to learn of Jung's original inspiration in occultism and the *volksisch* movement at the turn of the century. However, Jung's popularity among New Age groups today provides an important clue to the origin of his ideas in a similar context a century ago.

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's *The Occult Roots of Nazism* is published by J. B. Tauris, priced £12.95.

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Elusive faith

Claire Messud

THE GARDENS OF LIGHT

By Amin Maalouf

Quarrel, £15

ISBN 0 7043 7106 5

AMIN MAALOUF, who won the Prix Goncourt in 1993, weaves tapestries of intrigue that illuminate a broader historical moment. He typically takes as his focus an eminent life of the lost Arab world, such as Omar Khayyam or Leo Africanus. In *The Gardens of Light*, the eminence in question is Mani, founder and prophet of Manichaeism, a faith whose tenets have been all but lost, and whose heritage is but a derogatory adjective in our current vocabulary. Mani lived in the 3rd century AD in Persia, in what was then the Sassanian Empire, a powerful Eastern dynasty often at war with the Romans. His is a world overlooked by Western history books, and Maalouf must conjure not only an alien society, but Mani's tortured place in it.

Maalouf, in his engaging prose, goes a considerable way towards restoring Mani to us. The novel traces his Parthian heritage; his miserable youth in the clutches of an all-male Christian cult; the nomadic beginnings of his ministry; and his complex relationship to the Sassanian rulers. It bears witness to his torture and death at the hands of those same leaders in AD 274.

What proves more elusive, however, is the substance of Mani's faith. He renounced all possessions, he promoted tol-

erance between religions and races, he was a pacifist, he advocated the beautiful. We learn that he took his prophesy from an inner voice that he called his "Twin". But somehow, Mani's doctrine fails to emerge in Maalouf's otherwise colourfully imagined account. As a result, Mani the man remains cloudy, his actions not entirely explicable and his grim fate only moderately affecting. Unsure of what Mani's teachings actually entailed, the contemporary reader cannot know what was lost with their eradication.

IN THIS respect, *The Gardens of Light* is somewhat disappointing: its omissions lie not in the external details of a foreign world — in this, Maalouf is as eloquent as ever — but in its spiritual core. It ought, perhaps, to be enough to know that Mani was silenced for propounding a compassionate vision; but that is a tragedy so common in man's history that one needs, in the end, to know more.

There is a trainspotter quality to Peter Hopkirk's *Quest for Kim*. In *Search of Kipling's Great Game* (John Murray, £15.99, ISBN 0 7195 5560 4) — charming or a bit Pooterish, according to taste. Having completed his well-received quintet of volumes on the Great Game, the typically public schoolboy expression for the mainly Victorian struggle for power in Central Asia, Peter Hopkirk, a distinguished former foreign correspondent on this newspaper, has discarded his quasi-academic gown, dusted down his *dhoni*, and taken to his *ghazri* in search of the characters and places which inhabit Rudyard Kipling's wonderfully evocative novel, *Kim*.

Hopkirk's fascination with the Orient began when, as a lad himself, he first read this tale of the Anglo-Indian urchin who combines recruitment into the Great Game with devotion to a Tibetan lama. Kipling skillfully plays these two separate paths against each other, but cannot avoid having his young hero opt for his dutiful career, his sahib's destiny. Perhaps if he had completed *Kim* before 1900, the outcome might have been different. By then Kipling had been a decade away from India and was well into his imperialist phase.

That very year he spent time in South Africa, working on the Bloemfontein newspaper *The Friend*, promoting the

If you can find a novel's truth



Lahore Station by Janina Slater, from *Quest for Kim*

British war effort against the Boers. But he retained enough affection for India to describe its rich culture, with its energy and vivid colour. As a result, even Edward Said, in his indefatigable watch for the heinous sin of Orientalism, admits that — in this case, at least — Kipling failed to bend his aesthetic vision to any overt political agenda.

Hopkirk is not too concerned with such airy debates, it is true. His object is to follow Kim's itinerary — from Lahore to Varanasi and up into the

Himalayas — while, from his own historical knowledge, he matches the book's characters to known individuals.

His boyish enthusiasm carries his quest along. "Kim's gun", Zam-Zammah, at the start of the novel, has often been identified as standing in front of the Lahore Museum, or "Wonder House". But, armed with Murray's *Handbook of the Punjab*, published in 1883 and now rare, Hopkirk discovers what has escaped Kipling biographers, including Charles Carrington and

Angus Wilson — that, in Kipling's day, when his father John was curator, the museum itself was located elsewhere.

So Hopkirk proceeds through the book's locations — Mahbub Ali's horse bazaar (never quite pinned down), Lahore railway station and the "Le-rain", Kim's St Xavier in Partibus, identified as La Martinière College in Lucknow, the only school in the British Empire to have won battle honours (for its pupils' role in the 1857 Mutiny), and so on.

With *Kim*'s characters, Hopkirk is in his element. Thus Colonel Creighton, the *pukka* spy chief who recruits Kim into the Great Game, is based on Colonel Thomas Montgomery, who ran the Survey of India. Mahbub Ali existed in real life, and Lurgan Sahib, the mysterious Simla shop-keeper, is authenticated as A. M. Jacob, who sold the 184.5 carat Victoria diamond, which is now valued at £250 million, to the Nizam of Hyderabad.

It pays, of course, to know the original book. But then many people clearly do. As Hopkirk tells us in one of his many illuminating asides, *Kim* still sells 1,000 copies a week in various editions. Occasionally old-fashioned, never dull, *Quest for Kim* — with its choice illustrations by Janina Slater — is a Murray guide to rank among the best.

ANDREW LYCETT

Made by nothing stronger than necessity

Philip Howard on the survival of the stories that more than bear retelling

Made by nothing stronger than necessity

This book describes in lurid detail double infanticide by a mother with combat knife, serial murder by combustible poison, allegations of rape by a stepmother, an X-files death from the sea through battery by wild horses, and resurrection from the dead. In other words, this sounds like an everyday story of television listings before the 9 o'clock watershed. But it is better than that. And it is worth asking why these primitive tragedies still fascinate us in our different worlds 25 centuries later.

For they scream across 3,000 years. A week seldom passes without a performance of one of them in Greek or English, in the National Theatre or a school hall. Derek Walcott won the Nobel Prize for Literature for *Omeros*, his recasting of the Homeric legends in Caribbean dress. By this golden jubilee year, the first Penguin Classics, *The Odyssey* translated by E. V. Rieu, has overtaken *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as Penguin's biggest best-seller.

How can this be? How can Euripides live in the age of *EastEnders*? Well, one reason is the huge growth in the study of Classics in translation that has accompanied the decline of compulsory Greek and Latin language in

ALCESTIS And Other Plays

By Euripides
Translated by John Davie
Introduction and notes
by Richard Rutherford
Penguin Classics, £6.99
ISBN 1 35 79 10 86 42

schools and universities. Another reason is the revival of interest by non-academic amateurs in their heritage. But the main reason is that these tragedies actually are very good, in spite of the fact that people have been saying they are very good for so many centuries. Anybody knows that who has lately seen Derek Jacobi play Oedipus or Diana Rigg as Medea.

The plays deal with basic instincts. And Euripides, although described as a misogynist by contemporaries, was a proto-feminist. He wrote the best women's parts for the theatre before Racine, though on his stage they were played by men in masks and high heels. If Shakespeare had known more Greek, I would have suspected that he had read the *Hippolytus* before writing the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. Phaedra's Nurse is the same sex-obsessed old gossip who helps to trigger tragedy.

This year's new translations of the *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alceste* and *The Children of Heracles* replace the 1953 Penguin Classics for two of the plays. They incorporate the latest scholarship, such as W. S. Barrett's majestic edition of the *Hippolytus* (OUP, £25). The book's selections of text and meaning are state-of-the-art scholarship, which is not surprising since the translator is Head of Classics at St Paul's School.

The notes are psychologically shrewd: once she has confessed her guilty love, Phaedra can speak more freely and with more self-control. This translation is into clear but old-fashioned prose, where its predecessor was into blank verse and other verse for the chorus. For example, in the *Medea* the Chorus guests that Medea is about to slaughter her children, and burst into a hymn about the grief of mothers. John Davie's translation renders its opening: "Many times, ere now I have entertained thoughts more subtle and engaged in arguments more weighty than the female sex should pursue." As an exercise in old-fashioned prose, this is superb. But to stage the *Medea*, you should use one of the less accurate but more natural translations such as the one played by the Actors of Dionysus.

Niceness is not enough

When did it all go wrong? Most of us have an answer, implicit or explicit, that colours everything else. Chesterton and Belloc lamented the Restoration. One sort of English Marxist despised the Restoration of 1660, the renaissance of 1640s antinomianism; another sort bewailed the 1780s, the unmitigated of the working class in the Industrial Revolution. Conservatives sometimes let slip heretical views about 1832, seen as the beginning of a slippery democratic slope.

The 20th century, of course, has been lived in the long shadow of 1917; and as we emerge from that experience, our perspective on our past subtly shifts too. More and more, we are forced to confront the consequences — non-negotiable, irreversible, protean — of 1776.

Jonathan Clark
pose on his age at any cost. So historians typically ignored him: Lord North, not Bonar Law, became "the Unknown Prime Minister".

Whiteley's scholarly rehabilitation presents him as a spokesman for a pragmatic culture that put prosperity first. North echoed the preoccupations of his class: patronage, wealth, worldly success, and those elaborate formulae for soothing "ruffled" feathers summed up as "politeness".

These leading figures produced a distinctive political world, preoccupied with the Court and the House of Commons, regarding public opinion as an unwelcome intrusion, and treating major issues of public principle as problems to be managed.

Whiteley's North was not driven by ambition or avarice. His reputation as "an extreme conservative" was unjustified, and derived from the mud randomly thrown in the Wilkes affair. "Let America

look to Britain as a kind of parent and friend" was his policy on the colonies. So why did it all go wrong?

This, the best book on North to date, shows us a politician with negative virtues: his need to consult everyone; his tendency to concentrate on detail rather than the overall picture. He was, says Whiteley, "infinitely when compromise might still have been possible and accommodating when it was too late".

Yet perhaps detailed and strategic remedies were equally vain: no smooth words at Westminster, no clever footwork in Downing Street, could have prevented the American volcano from erupting. Historians now see how much more there was to that revolution than reactions to innovations in British policy. Against these mounting pressures, niceness was not enough.

There are, of course, no modern parallels to this story. Never again will things go disastrously wrong in our foreign policy. Decent, honourable prime ministers will never again be overwhelmed by the proliferating consequences of a drive to create a federal union out of a collection of independent states. We are lucky to live in modern times, in which history does not repeat itself.

Inventiveness at a premium

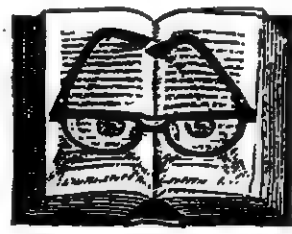
FOR ME, the book of the year was always going to be T.S. Eliot's unpublished early poems, *Inventions of the March Hare* (Faber, £30). The invention is that of the style and forms of the *Prufrock* and 1920 poems. The annotation by Christopher Ricks is denser than that to any other poetry, including Shakespeare. Such a mass of sources invites incredulity — could anyone have so much in mind? — and yet all but one or two of them, individually considered, are convincing and illuminating.

Sadly, many commentators were more interested in the old and marginal argument about whether Eliot was anti-Semitic — raked over by Anthony Julius in his book *T.S. Eliot: Anti-Semitism and Literary Form* (Cambridge, £30) — than in reading his poems. Christopher Ricks also published the best literary criticism of the year with *Essays in Appreciation* (Oxford, £25). No one reads better.

SEBASTIAN CARTER, of the Rampant Lions press, was born in 1941 on the day that *Burnt Norton*, the first of Eliot's *Four Quartets*, appeared as a pamphlet. That booklet was smaller than even the prospectus for Carter's large quarto edition of the *Quartets*, which could hardly be further removed from the days of war-economy stringencies.

Issued in Paris, the *Quartets* were avidly read during the war, as bulletins about the culture people were fighting to preserve. Eliot, by then an intellectual beacon, abandoned the obscurantism of *The Waste Land*, and set down his exploration of spiritual riddles as clearly as he could. Like the concerts at the National Gallery, this was demanding art for a large audience. At a shilling each, the *Quartets* were popular and often reprinted.

Carter's edition has been hand-set on expensive pages of heavy mould-made paper. Part-titles are printed with colours suggestive of the *Quartets* (rather tenuous relationship to the four elements, and the boards are



BIBLIOMANE

covered with a paste-paper harmonising these tones. The only previous fine press edition of the poem, printed in Verona in 1960, was unluckily set from a reprint in which five lines were misplaced. Here, Carter has taken great care to avoid awkward line and page breaks, and the text is beautifully disposed. But by setting it in such large type (18-point), he makes of the poem a monument rather than a media-tion.

JIM MCCUE

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Sect that survived despite offending the pagans

Karen
Armstrong is
enlightened
by a fresh
look at an
enduring faith

A NEW HISTORY
OF CHRISTIANITY
By Vivian Green
Alan Sutton, £20
ISBN 0 7509 1271 5

One of the most extraordinary claims in the history of religion must surely have been that made by a group of Jews who declared that a man who had been executed as a common criminal in an obscure province of the Roman Empire had, in some sense, been divine. Since this notion was not only considered blasphemous by the vast majority of their fellow Jews but regarded by most educated pagans as deeply offensive, nobody would have expected this despised sect to last very long.

Yet Christianity not only survived but became a major world religion. Vivian Green has now attempted a new interpretation of its 2,000 year history. Despite its title, Green provides us with a solid, efficient and dispassionate overview of the Christian story which should become a valuable work of reference.

Green is an impartial chronicler and he does not spare the churches, assessing their failures as well as their triumphs. He traces the development of Christianity from its Jewish beginnings to its current struggles with modernity honestly and without confessional bias.

Green gives his readers sufficient but not excessive detail, and thus enables them to make a valid assessment of the complexities of Christian history. In the process, he shows the resilience of the faith, which, despite its present problems, seems set to survive well into its third millennium.

Green's narrative concentrates on the more external aspects of Christian history: his chief interest is to chart the Church's development as a power structure and he does this well. What the book lacks is a sufficiently compelling explanation of Christianity's extraordinary appeal. Each of the great faiths has its own particular genius, which influences its development quite as much as the policies of its leaders and the institutions which Green describes so ably.

Thus there is little discussion of the nature of Chris-

meaningless squabbles, instead of expressing — in a way quite peculiar to Christianity — the extreme difficulty of speaking and thinking about our experience of the divine. We do not, therefore, in Green's account, really understand the reasons for the Eastern churches' rejection of the Council of Chalcedon, for the controversy in Greek Orthodoxy about the validity of icons, nor do we see why the Eastern and Western churches were in such fierce and passionate dispute about the *filioque* clause in the Creed.

Green also falls into the trap of regarding Christianity as an essentially Western faith. Once Christianity has been established in Europe, he implies that the Eastern churches are little more than a sideshow; whereas there is a good case for arguing that, at least until the 12th century, it was the other way around. Indeed, this myopia about other traditions has been one of the greatest flaws of Western Christianity. This failing, together with the Western tendency to emphasise external matters of dogma and discipline more than spirituality, can also be seen as major causes of Christianity's difficulties in today's pluralistic world.

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Detail of Giotto's Nativity in the Scrovegni Chapel, Padua

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Saved from the bump

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

A YOUNG family this week became the latest victims of holiday "bumping" — the hated practice normally associated with scheduled airlines — when the owner of their Christmas holiday apartment in Lanzarote overbooked his properties by 20 per cent.

Lisa Snow, her husband Tony and their two children aged four and 18 months booked the self-catering holiday in June and paid the £969.41 cost of the one-week holiday in June and paid the £969.41 cost of the one-week holiday in full in September.

But a phone call "out of the blue" from their travel agent told them that the accommodation had been let instead to tourists from another country and they would not be able to fly from Gatwick on Boxing Day as planned.



A winter holiday in Lanzarote after all: Lisa Snow with children Hayley and Shaun

"We were absolutely devastated," said Mrs Snow, from Banstead in Surrey. "My husband could only get that one week between Christmas and New Year as holiday and we specifically chose the flights and the self-catering apartment to fit in with that."

The Snows were told by their local branch of Thomas Cook, through whom they had booked the holiday, that their operator Unijet had "fallen out" with the local hotelier and that the accommodation was no longer available.

Instead they were offered the return flights plus £30 a

head to cover the cost of accommodation, or the option of paying nearly £1,000 extra to upgrade to a hotel.

"To do that to us just ten days before we were due to travel is outrageous," said Mr Snow.

"Unfortunately, it seemed that Unijet just weren't inter-

ested in our problems and only wanted to palm us off with the £30."

But Nigel Jenkins, Unijet group director, said that like many other British tour operators, his company had been the victim of "nasty hoteliers" and that legal action was now being considered.

"Early in the booking season hoteliers, especially in the Canaries, tend to overbook their rooms just as scheduled airlines do with their seats," said Mr Jenkins. "They know that many months in advance one country or another will have a particular problem and people will drop out."

"So when a hotelier with 100 rooms to let sells 30 to each of four operators, he is going to be overbooked by 20 per cent unless people drop out. And this time no one did."

"But it is a dreadful time of the year to do it to anyone and we can only apologise to Mr and Mrs Snow."

In earlier years no one would have been aware of the problem and the tour operator and travel agency between them would have found a solution.

New European legislation, however, means that immediately there is any hint of a problem, the client must be told.

Hours after speaking to Travel News, the Snows were called again by Thomas Cook to say that Unijet had found them accommodation in the luxury four-star Princess Hotel almost next door to their original apartment in Playa Blanca. And, as it was Christmas, Unijet decided also to deduct £100 per person from the final bill.

The post-Christmas holiday will now go ahead, with the Snows paying even less than they would have done for the self-catering accommodation they originally booked.

"We are really pleased," said Mr Snow. "But it should not have happened in the first place and something must be done to stop it from happening to others in the future."

US holds up compensation More ships needed as cruises keep booming

By TONY DAVE

DESPITE a deal by European transport ministers, most airline passengers cannot buckle their seatbelts knowing that they or their families will be compensated adequately should the plane crash.

British Airways this week announced plans to offer improved compensation after the deal, but passengers on many other airlines remain bound by the 67-year-old Warsaw Convention, which set compensation limits at £14,000.

Efforts to reach a worldwide agreement to waive the limits are being hampered by the United States Government, which insists that its citizens should receive the highest possible payouts, and by Third World countries which are fearful that their airlines might be bankrupted by huge claims.

"Passengers on most airlines are still left with the Warsaw limits and their only hope of securing larger sums is if they can prove negligence," said Tim Goodyear, the International Air Transport Association spokesman.

IATA agreed in October last year to lift the limits and

suggested that appropriate damages might depend on where the victim lived. The US Department of Transportation has insisted, however, that any airline flying to or through America must be ordered to recompense American victims according to US law. As efforts continue to end the international impasse, European ministers have agreed to raise compensation limits for passengers flying on European airlines.

British Airways has said it will offer passengers unlimited liability should they be involved in accidents anywhere in the world — apart from flights to and from the United States, because of the continuing legal wrangles there. If the airline can prove that it has done everything within its power to prevent the accident, a limit of £80,000 will apply.

"The decision sweeps away the passenger liability limit which has remained intact for almost 70 years, and will offer passengers significant extra protection in the unlikely event of an accident," said Bob Ayling, BA's chief executive.

FIVE new ships are to be pressed into service to meet the increasing demand for Britain's biggest holiday success story — cruising.

An estimated 420,000 British holidaymakers took a cruise in 1996 — up 20 per cent for the second year in succession. And there is no sign of the phenomenal rate of growth in demand for holidays afloat slackening in 1997, from low-cost package deals in the Mediterranean to luxury cruises to faraway destinations.

Thomson, the package tour operator, this week revealed details of plans to charter two liners, its rival, Airtours, is taking delivery of its second ship aimed at cut-price family cruises, and both the Fred Olsen Line and Saga, the over-50s specialist tour operator, are to begin operations with a new ship during 1997.

The biggest and most luxurious to join in the rush is P&O's 63,524-ton *Arcadia*, with passengers paying up to £38,380 a head for a 92-day world tour.

The *Arcadia* will replace the *Canberra*, the 37-year-old

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

former troop ship, which will soon be in breach of tough new safety regulations. The ship, now owned by P&O's US-based sister company, Princess Cruises, is already sailing from America to the Caribbean as *Star Princess* and will be renamed *Arcadia* when it has completed a £10 million refit to remove all vestiges of "Americanness" and replace them with obvious British characteristics.

Among the changes will be the creation of an on-board pub to be called The Oval which will be filled with cricketing memorabilia, much of it brought over from the *Canberra*. "Many of our passengers feel very much at home in *Canberra*," Gwyn Hughes, managing director of P&O Cruises, said. "We want them to feel that the *Canberra* family is simply moving home."

Thomson shook the, normally staid cruise market with plans to lease the *Island Breeze* and the *Emerald* complete with crews from America and offer cruises in the same way that it now packages land-based holidays.

Prices will start at £399 for adults and £99 for children for one week on board and almost all the customers — 63 per cent first-time cruisers — are expected to combine this with a week at a resort on dry land. The two ships will join a third, the *Sapphire*, which is already sailing for Thomson.

"Within a few years I expect that the industry will be dominated by ships chartered by tour operators," Steve Garley, Thomson's commercial director, said.

Cruise companies are making healthy profits as demand rises and costs fall. The fuel bill for *Arcadia* is half that of *Canberra*, although both carry about 1,600 passengers. Yet the average price of sailing in *Arcadia* will be about 20 per cent higher than in *Canberra*.

Thomson has paid a lump-sum charter fee to the ship's owners and then calculated a price based on selling every cabin in the same way that it can cut air fares by filling every seat on a charter flight.

There are now 30 new cruise ships on order around the world for delivery by the end of the century.

CHRISTMAS cottages are still available from Rural Retreats. A five-night stay in a home for four, decorated for the season, in Herefordshire costs £471. Details: 01386 201177.

■ FASHIONABLE Val d'Isoire in the French Alps for a week for £199 a person with a flight from Gatwick tomorrow and half-board hotel accommodation is among the late offers available from First Choice Ski. Details: 0990 557735.

■ CROSS-COUNTRY skiing based in the "cuckoo clock" village of Kandersteg, Switzerland, is available for £519 a person for a week from December 28, including half-board and ferry crossing, from Headwater.

DISCOUNTS of up to 50 per cent off published room rates are available from Forte hotels at 90 of its Le Meridien and Grand hotels around the world. The Winter Passport offer lasts until March 31 and covers bookings for two nights or more. Details: 0345 404040.

■ A TWO-NIGHT new year package at the Telford Moat House in Shropshire offers unlimited use of the hotel's leisure facilities, including pool and golf course. The cost is £175 per person. Details: 01952 429977.

■ BLACKWELL Grange, a country house hotel near Darlington, offers a four-course dinner and a piper at midnight for its new year package. The cost is £125 per

Holidays. Flight packages cost an extra £240. Details: 01606 48699.

■ CYCLING tours with See South Africa start in February. Guided trips through the eastern Transvaal and Cape province cost from £515 a week, £995 for two weeks. Flights to the republic are extra. Details: 0181 395 6060.

■ THE Algarve for a fortnight for £179 a person on a Cosmos self-catering holiday, with a flight from Gatwick on December 28 is among late offers from Lunn Poly. Details from the company's Holiday Shops.

■ ABSEILING, canoeing

and hillwalking are available during new year breaks at YHA centres. Four nights full board at Edale in the Peak District from December 29 costs £158, three nights at Llangollen from December 30, £119. Details: 01978 860330.

■ WEST country cottages are still available over the new year from Farm and Cottage Holidays with a week from December 28 costing £225 in a home for four. Details: 01237 479698.

■ CRUISE the Caribbean from £695 a person aboard the *Costa Classica*, with a flight to Guadeloupe on January 11 and eight nights' full board. Details from The Cruise Network 01772 727222.

Alps" brochure, offering three and six-night packages at five luxury alpine resort hotels until April 12. Details: 0990 300 232.

■ MOLLINGTON Banastre Hotel in Chester is already thinking about St Valentine's Day with a special offer including a dinner, accommodation and a bottle of champagne for £65 per person. Details: 01244 851471.

■ A DOZEN red roses and champagne is the Valentine offer from L'Horizon Hotel in Jersey. A two-night break costs £249 per person and includes flights from Gatwick or Southampton, hire car, accommodation and a Valentine's Ball. Details: 01534 43101.

BRITANNY Ferries has launched new holiday homes and camping brochures for 1997. Prices range from £168 and £195 a week respectively for a family of four. Standard return prices on four routes to France start at £140 for a car and driver. Details: 0990 360360.

■ LE SHUTTLE has a limited service and is not expected to offer any promotional fares for some time. Day-trips cost £59, a five-day ticket £69 and standard returns £129. Reservations must be made. Details: 0990

35355. And today is the last day for cheap pre-Christmas day-trips on Eurostar. Prices start at £49 for travel from Waterloo or Ashford to Lille, Calais, Paris and Brussels. Details: 0345 303030.

■ VISITORS to Ireland can save more than £100 on Swansea Cork Ferries by travelling on Thursday or Friday, returning on Monday within specified time bands. The return fare is £139 for a car and five

passengers. Details: 01792 456116.

■ HOVERSPED has a ski/ferry package from £99 for ten days' cover (£109 for 17 days) for a car and two adults. The package includes crossing, sports insurance and RAC motoring assistance. Details: 0990 240241.

■ SALLY Ferries has a £30, three-day return available until December 31 for a car and up to five passengers from Ramsgate to Dunkirk or Ostend. Contact Eurodrive 0181 324 4000.

FROM next month it will be easier to reach Aalborg, in Jutland, Denmark, with the new Mærsk Air direct service. Fares are lower, too. These range from £144 for business class down to £155 for a super saver excursion. Details: 0171 333 0066.

■ TRANSATLANTIC fares tumble after the new year. Deals available between January and March from airline network include a £163 plus £36 tax offer to New York Newark, flying Virgin Atlantic. In addition there's a £256 fare plus £26

tax flying TWA to numerous destinations in California, Texas, Arizona and Colorado. Details: 01772 727272.

■ BETWEEN December 26 and January 1 Air UK has a £59 Santa fare to Amsterdam, Brussels or Paris. Details: 0345 666777.

■ FROM January Sabena agent Citibond is charging fares of £615 to Macau (an alternative gateway for Hong Kong, and Johannes-

burg at £550. Details: 0171 408 1535.

■ MAJOR Travel is charging £116 for return flights with Swiss Air or Cross Air to Zurich from Heathrow or London City Airport. The offer is available between January and March. Details: 0171 485 7017.

■ BRITISH Airways has extended its domestic super saver fares until March. Return prices from London include Belfast for £74, Edinburgh and Newcastle for £75. Details: 0345 222111.

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Nightmare? More like a dream come true

Nightmare is an overused word these days, but you can't blame people for using it. What you can do, however, is blame people for thinking it's an original way of describing an unpleasant situation. "So what was it like being stuck in that lift with an escaped spider acrobat group, with flames flicking the walls of your premature burial chamber?" asks the reporter. "Nightmare," comes the banal (though accurate) reply. You see, it doesn't matter that this person has a dream of spiders, and is not claustrophobic, it doesn't matter that his own personal nightmare is being late for a piano exam. "Nightmare" we conclude, and everyone looks sympathetic and says "I know". People have started saying it was a nightmare in WH Smith's when there was a queue of five people at the till.

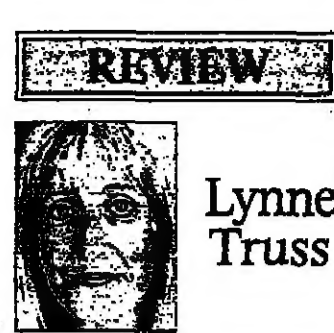
I always knew Mary Shelley had a nightmare and then wrote *Frank-*

enstein; what had somehow eluded me was the news that Bram Stoker followed suit exactly with *Dracula*. It turns out, then, that Christopher Frayling's *Nightmare: the Birth of Horror* (BBC1) is quite literally titled. In fact, this week's first two instalments both featured hammy reconstructions of 19th-century people writhing asleep in white nightgowns and then sitting up to yell "Aaaaaa!" Stoker's own seminal dream (if I may be so bold) evidently concerned a trio of pneumatic virgin brides pouncing on his neck, only to be stopped by the command "This man belongs to me," uttered by a black-suited figure in a doorway. Since Stoker's dream wasn't really a nightmare, but a vision of his only option was to head for his bed and get cracking on a book.

If I had to choose a favourite form of telly entertainment, a series like this would rank high. Frayling is unfailingly interesting

on telly, and horror literature is a pet subject of his, on which he published books when a mere academic. As Frayling ties his yellow Rupert Bear scarf and ascends a steep Welshian rock, it doesn't matter too much that phoney flashes of lightning keep appearing in the sky, or that the sound-effects man with the thunder-sheet is ridden near to exhaustion. It doesn't even matter that the film clips come only from inexpensive sources. As in his memorable series about the impact of Turkishham on western diets, *Nightmare* tells a story about a story, and listening to it on a dreary December night is as comforting as hot chocky and blankets.

A item on food allergy featured in the last instalment of *Trust Me, I'm a Doctor* (BBC2) — an enjoyable series that with a bit more publicity could well become an institution



Lynne Truss

— and it reminded me of a woman I once met at a *Private Eye* lunch who refused to eat fish. "Can't you eat it?" I asked caringly, patting her hand. "No," she said. But instead of the expected food-allergy story, she went on: "Well, I once had a nightmare about watching across a swimming pool, and the thing was, hundreds of fish were nudging me, and nibbling my thighs, and it was horrible, horri-

ble, horrible, and I can't stand fish any more, make it go away, I can't stand it."

Understandably, the *Trust Me* item made no allowances for nightmare-induced aversion, but was otherwise up to standard. Evidently the widespread allergy to peanuts in today's children stems from the quantities of peanut oil used in jars of baby food. The advice "This food contains nuts" is therefore not a matter of showing off, as I rather stupidly assumed it was. Other useful insights from last night's programme were that folic acid will soon be added to staple foods; that the circumference of baby boys has no medical foundation; and that you are more likely to die while watching the National Lottery than while playing the jackpot.

This last, highly interesting statistic strongly implies that a lot of people have died while watching the lottery, but such sad news

probably won't stop anybody buying a ticket. Dying during the lottery is a distinction of which many would be proud. Just think, it could be you!

Ken Loach's Modern Times: The *Flickering Flame* (BBC2) concerned the agony of 500 Liverpool dock workers locked out a year ago, and not supported by their union. As you would expect from Loach, the film had an emphatic, lecturing quality (screen captions stating facts: narration from that serious actor Brian Cox), yet made admirably light work of union meetings. As with Jimmy McGovern's *Hillsborough*, the *Flickering Flame* was a case of public agenda-setting, of airing a complicated and painful story that has suffered from "media blackout". Curious, then, that the BBC only received *The Flickering Flame* on Tuesday, making it almost impossible for

the press to see it before transmission.

Finally, Channel 4's wonderful animation series *Pond Life* (by Candy Guard) ended yesterday, with the usual 5.45 instalment just a taster for a double episode later on. Having raved about *Pond Life* on its first transmission, I still rave about it to anyone who will listen, and in the last two weeks have even plugged it on local radio stations in the course of trying to explain why single women are funny, for God's sake, and not asocial freaks who get down in the dumps at Christmas.

Anyway, in last night's final episode — *The Driving Test* — Dolly had the most convincing bad dream of the evening: her examiner turning into a dog just before reversing-round-a-corner. *Pond Life* deserves to be a classic. I just hope Channel 4 repeats it at a better hour. I mean, 5.45? What a nightmare.

BBC1

- 6.00am BUSINESS BREAKFAST (95136)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (173977)
- 8.00 Breakfast News Extra (1720890)
- 9.20 STYLE CHALLENGE (4610109)
- 9.45 KILROY (4642558)
- 10.30 CAN'T COOK, WON'T COOK with Kevin Woodford (111712)
- 11.00 NEWS (1) and weather (3086242)
- 11.05 THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW Consumer advice (5067155)
- 11.45 SMILLIE'S PEOPLE (9632726)
- 12.00 NEWS (1), regional news and weather (8175559)
- 12.05pm SNOWY RIVER — THE BLACKBURN SAGA (3176703)
- 12.50 MICHAEL BARRY'S CHOICE CUTS (3047880)
- 1.00 NEWS (1) and weather (30074)
- 1.30 REGIONAL NEWS (9697265)
- 1.40 NEIGHBOURS (1) (29417242)
- 2.00 CALL MY BLUFF (4277)
- 2.30 THE TERRACE Last in the series (757)
- 3.00 INCOGNITO (8684)
- 3.30 PINOCCHIO (1) (5744880) 3.50 Casper Classics (1) (1927242) 4.00 The Itsy Bitsy Spider (1) (589800) 4.20 Julia Jolly and Harriet Hyde (1) (5146555) 4.35 Smart Little in series (1) (746727) 5.00 Newsround (1) (522838) 5.10 The Biz (1) (524345)
- 5.35 NEIGHBOURS (1) (1) (591882)
- 6.00 NEWS and weather (1) (426)
- 6.30 REGIONAL NEWS (906)
- 7.00 WATCHDOG Consumer magazine presented by Anne Robinson (1) (8093)
- 7.30 EASTENDERS Lorraine learns a secret and Grant has some apologising to do (1) (890)
- 8.00 ANIMAL HOSPITAL DOWN UNDER In the final programme from Australia, Rolf Harris accompanies a flying vet to what must be the world's smallest and most crowded veterinary surgery (1) (5151)
- 8.30 ZOOPOINT CHILDREN Find of two-part story which concludes tomorrow. Bert's mid-life crisis is worsening and Bill inherits a mysterious gift (1) (3548)
- 9.00 NEWS (1), regional news and weather (6987)
- 9.30 THE THIN BLUE LINE Power faces a dilemma when Patricia announces she is to spend her leave on an organised protest against a new bypass (1) (45819)
- 10.00 CROCODILE SHOES Boom! Jack receives some vital new information which leads him to the man by whom he was framed. Last in series (1) (18977)
- 10.55 QUESTION TIME With Malcolm Rifkind, MP, Clare Short, MP, Matthew Paris, TV presenter, and Valerie Amos from the Runnymede Trust (1) (35600)
- 11.55 CLIVE ANDERSON ALL TALK (1) (1) (801384)
- 12.30am FILM: Tests the Blood of Dracula (1970) starring Christopher Lee, Geoffrey Keen, Owen Watford and Ralph Bates. A disciple of Dracula recruits three Victorian thrill-seekers to obtain the notorious Count's coffin (2204) 1.00am FILM: Directed by Peter Jackson (48827)
- 2.00 WEATHER (5749597)

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BBC2

- 6.00am OPEN UNIVERSITY: Tilings at the Axioms (7502074) 6.25 Blue Haven (7521109) 6.50 The True Geometry of Nature (7555771) 7.15 Best Breakfast News (284289) 7.30 The Legend of Prince Valiant (5602242) 7.50 Blue Peter (5788258) 8.15 Noddy (5421345) 8.25 Pingu (5349797) 8.35 The Record (5812994) 9.00 Coppertone (30704) 10.00 Playdays (220105) 10.25 The Fugitive (894884) 11.15 The Phil Silvers Show (5577172) 11.40 Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars (537659) 12.00 Operation Survival (22426) 12.30pm Working Lunch (50797) 1.00 Pingu (82013518) 1.05 Noddy (59415797)
- 1.15 FILM: Jersey (1947, b/w) Brooding drama starring Margaret Lockwood and directed by Bernard Knowles (3146155)
- 2.55 BRAINWAVES (1847971) 3.00 News (7803242) 3.05 The Natural World (2210180) 3.55 News (5788548) 4.00 Today's the Day (819) 4.30 Ready, Steady, Cook! (703) 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (4453345) 5.40 Mary Berry (893519) 5.55 Turning Points (386170)
- 6.00 STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE (1) (52519)
- 6.45 QUANTUM LEAP (1) (1) (86838)
- 7.30 FIRST SIGHT (432) EAST: Matter of Fact MIDLANDS: Midlands Report SOUTH: Southern Eye
- 8.00 THE WORKS: The Stone Diaries Following the creation of "environmental" sculpture, Andy Goldsworthy's latest artwork (1) (9165)
- 8.30 TOP GEAR Quentin Wilson, Steve Barry and Michele Newman accompany drivers on the London to Brighton run for vintage cars (1) (4890)
- 9.00 3RD ROCK FROM THE SUN Dick has to arrange a funeral and Tommy is torn between Cheryl and August (1) (4528)
- 9.30 BANGLADESH 25 Film maker Rumi Amin documents the lives of Bangladeshis who have made London's East End their home (1) (951038)
- 10.15 ADS INFINITUM (851797)
- 10.30 NEWSNIGHT (1) (151871)
- 11.15 LOOKING FOR TAT (88800)
- 11.25 THE OLD LADY AND THE PIGEONS (800258)
- 11.45 CHAIRMAN'S ORDER Animation, followed by Siding Forecast (207074)
- 12.00 PICTURE THIS (10730)
- 12.30am THE LEARNING ZONE: Open University: Out of the Mating Pot (54848) 1.30 Reflections on a Global Screen (54488) 2.00 Believing: The Long Search: West Meets East/Lose Empire/Fall to Faith (32169) 4.00 Business and Work Winning (94223) 5.00 Business and Work: The Small Business Programme (25) Steps to Better Management (72827)

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- 10.25 REGIONAL NEWS (3559526)
- 10.30 FILM: Hearts on Fire (1991) starring Lesley Ann Warren and Tom Stenert. A passionate love affair begins when a caring husband finds a woman to love after his wife who has multiple sclerosis. Directed by Jeff Bleckner (227255)
- 12.10pm CARTOON (5267258)
- 12.10 REGIONAL NEWS (1224123)
- 12.30 NEWS (1) and weather (585722)
- 12.55 SHORTLAND STREET (947513) 1.25 Coronation Street (1) (1) (6451646) 2.00 Home and Away (1) (94818138)
- 2.25 FILM: A Mom For Christmas (1990) Concluding the drama about a young girl's wish being fulfilled (5141971)
- 3.20 NEWS (1) (7883432)
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- 3.50 THE HIDDERS (502105) 3.55 Old Bear Christmas Special (1452141) 4.05 Scooby Doo (2886074) 4.15 Name That Tune! (1682703) 4.40 The Goggles Christmas Goggle (1) (1645277)
- 5.10 A COUNTRY PRACTICE (1) (7149345)
- 5.40 NEWS (1) and weather (60903)
- 6.00 HOME AND AWAY (1) (156867)
- 6.25 HTV NEWS (23460)
- 7.00 EMERALDALE (1) (3181)
- 7.30 TAXI A black cab has a hidden camera which records the unflattering occupants of the back seat (1) (258)
- 8.00 THE BILL Monroe and Conway deal with an inmate motorist (1) (9109)
- 8.30 MICHAEL BARRYMORE'S STRIKE IT RICH Game show (1) (8616)
- 9.00 FILM: Immediate Family (1990) with James Wood and Glenn Close. An affluent couple who are unable to conceive a child arrange to adopt the baby of a teenager, agreeing to finance her through pregnancy. Directed by Jonathan Kaplan. Concludes after the News (1) (4887)
- 10.00 NEWS (1) and weather (23109)
- 10.30 REGIONAL NEWS (365113)
- 10.40 FILM: Immediate Family Concludes (434161)
- 11.35 OASIS — BY THE SEA (208038)
- 12.15 NEIL YOUNG LIVE AT THE PHOENIX FESTIVAL (4369643)
- 1.35 NOT FADE AWAY (4830578)
- 2.35 FLUX (4369643)
- 3.35 LATE & LOUD (1) (8386440)
- 4.30 THE TIME... THE PLACE (45001)
- 5.00 THE NEW MRS SHOW (1) (20204)
- 5.30 NEWS (15285)

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SATELLITE AND



Steve Martin in the comedy *Mazed Nuts* (Movie Channel 6.00pm)

UK GOLD
7.00am Great Gold (2524703) 7.25 Countdown (2524703) 8.00 Neighbours (5872722) 8.25 EastEnders (2206168) 9.00 The Bill (464668) 9.30 One by One (5872722) 10.00 The Sullivan (663186) 11.00 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 12.00 Countdown (2524703) 12.30pm Neighbours (5872722) 1.00 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 1.30 A Little Bit of Every (2524703) 2.00 Countdown (2524703) 2.30 The Bill (464668) 3.00 The Sullivan (663186) 3.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 4.00 Countdown (2524703) 4.30 The Bill (464668) 5.00 The Sullivan (663186) 5.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 6.00 Countdown (2524703) 6.30 The Bill (464668) 7.00 The Sullivan (663186) 7.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 8.00 Countdown (2524703) 8.30 The Bill (464668) 9.00 The Sullivan (663186) 9.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 10.00 Countdown (2524703) 10.30 The Bill (464668) 11.00 The Sullivan (663186) 11.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 12.00 Countdown (2524703) 12.30 The Bill (464668) 1.00 The Sullivan (663186) 1.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 2.00 Countdown (2524703) 2.30 The Bill (464668) 3.00 The Sullivan (663186) 3.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 4.00 Countdown (2524703) 4.30 The Bill (464668) 5.00 The Sullivan (663186) 5.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 6.00 Countdown (2524703) 6.30 The Bill (464668) 7.00 The Sullivan (663186) 7.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 8.00 Countdown (2524703) 8.30 The Bill (464668) 9.00 The Sullivan (663186) 9.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 10.00 Countdown (2524703) 10.30 The Bill (464668) 11.00 The Sullivan (663186) 11.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 12.00 Countdown (2524703) 12.30 The Bill (464668) 1.00 The Sullivan (663186) 1.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 2.00 Countdown (2524703) 2.30 The Bill (464668) 3.00 The Sullivan (663186) 3.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 4.00 Countdown (2524703) 4.30 The Bill (464668) 5.00 The Sullivan (663186) 5.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 6.00 Countdown (2524703) 6.30 The Bill (464668) 7.00 The Sullivan (663186) 7.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 8.00 Countdown (2524703) 8.30 The Bill (464668) 9.00 The Sullivan (663186) 9.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 10.00 Countdown (2524703) 10.30 The Bill (464668) 11.00 The Sullivan (663186) 11.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 12.00 Countdown (2524703) 12.30 The Bill (464668) 1.00 The Sullivan (663186) 1.30 Soapy Soap Talk (1898513) 2.00 Countdown (2524703) 2.30 The Bill (464668) 3.00 The Sullivan (663186) 3.30 Soapy Soap Talk (189

SPORTS BOOKS 36

The prince of
Welsh rugby who
gave it all away

SPORT

THURSDAY DECEMBER 19 1996

EQUESTRIANISM 37

Scandal dominates
early proceedings
at Olympia show



Off spinner checks Zimbabwe's advance after Campbell's swashbuckling start

England rescued by imperial Croft

FROM SIMON WILDE IN BULAWAYO

BULAWAYO (first day of five: Zimbabwe won toss): Zimbabwe have scored 256 for six wickets against England

WHAT could have ended as a day of acute embarrassment for England was turned into one of satisfactory achievement through the excellent bowling of Robert Croft on the first day of the inaugural Test match against Zimbabwe here at Queens Club yesterday. Zimbabwe, at times 130 for one and 206 for three, reached stumps on 256 for six on a pitch already offering slight turn.

If England are to take control of the game there is still much work to be done. Andrew Flower and Paul Strang, Zimbabwe's seventh-wicket pair, both have Test centuries to their names and Strang is also a promising spin bowler who may subsequently have an even more

important role to play in the outcome of the match. The reason that Strang's brother, Bryan, a left-arm seamer, is playing any part at all is because Brandes turned an ankle in practice yesterday morning and was forced to pull out.

Flower has already taken firm root and resumes today on 58, having been at the crease more than three hours and faced 174 balls. He has so far dealt capably enough with Croft, whose figures of three for 45 from 29 probing overs suggest England have discovered their best off-spin bowler for years.

By giving Silverwood a first Test cap rather than Caddick a recall — a decision that cannot be dismissed as a failure, as Silverwood sustained damage yet finished with two wickets — England opted to field one of their least established attacks in recent memory. In

addition to the new boy, Gough was playing his first Test for more than a year, Tufnell his first for two years, while Croft — though no one would have thought it — had played for England only once before, at the Oval four months ago.

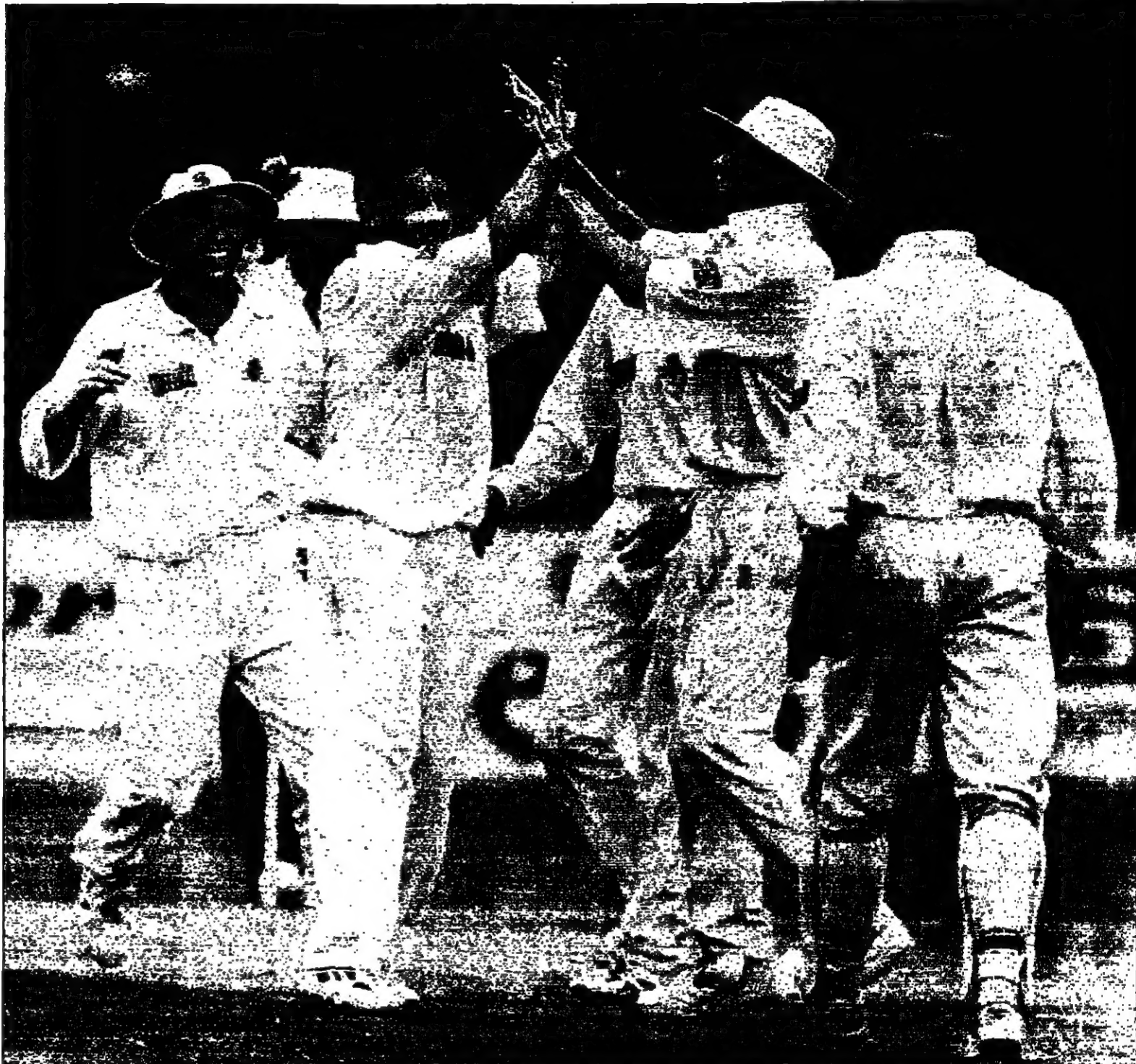
This meant that Mulally was cast in the role of senior performer and he failed, woe-folly, to live up to the part. After Gough had given England a wonderful start by forcing Carlisle to fend off his third ball of the day into the hands of Crawley at short leg, giving Gough his first Test wicket for 18 months, Mulally became the central figure in as inept a session of cricket as England have produced for many a year, and that is saying something.

Within minutes of Carlisle's departure, the new ball was being systematically wasted, the rest had disappeared from England's game and runs were flowing like water off Victoria Falls. For this, credit must be given to the left-handed Alistair Campbell, who was unfazed by his modest record at Test level (he has yet to score a century in 21 Tests) and the fact that he was captaining Zimbabwe for the first time in a home Test, and proceeded to tear into the England attack.

Even he admitted, though, that he would not have played such a positive game had not the balls been there to hit. Within his first 15 balls he had struck four fours, three of them pulled and driven in the same Mulally over, and no sooner had Silverwood come into the attack than he was dispatched for three fours in one over as well. Campbell scored 50 in 70 minutes and by lunch had moved on to 70, fed on a diet that he consumed with relish.

At the other end, no less ominously, Grant Flower, who batted 11 hours for an unbeaten double-century when Zimbabwe recorded their only Test win, over Pakistan last year, had dropped anchor. In the first hour he scored 12, in the second 22; and it was his dismissal, to a brilliant diving catch by Hussain at third slip off Silverwood 40 minutes into the afternoon, that marked the turn in England's fortunes.

Three overs later, Croft, whose first ball of the day



Croft is congratulated by his England colleagues as appeals for a catch at short leg against Waller are upheld at Queens Club yesterday

learned a concerted appeal for leg-before against the Zimbabwe captain, finally got his man when he threw the ball up to Campbell, inviting him to drive, and saw the ball skew high to Silverwood at backward point. Campbell had again missed out on a century but his 84, in a score of 136 for three, was worth its weight in gold to his pride.

England had no further success before tea but, as the temperature dropped from its cruellest heights, they enjoyed by far the best of the final session. During it they conceded only 56 runs and claimed the wickets of Houghton, who would have had his sights set on nothing less than a century, Waller and Whittall.

It was now that Atherton

first employed Croft and Tufnell in tandem and now that Croft bowled his most telling spell, 12-6-7-2. Houghton, who had begun edgily but settled in, went back to defend and was beaten by extra bounce, and Waller, on his debut, pushed forward and was caught at short leg.

By now, Croft was getting

the ball to turn. Among the skills of this intelligent cricketer are that he knows how to set a field and knows what pace to bowl on certain pitches so as to give the ball, and himself, a chance. People queued up to speak words of praise for him yesterday, including David Lloyd, the England coach, and Campbell, but the Welshman was not getting carried away.

"I am a confident cricketer but I have played long enough to know that every day you have to go out there and be up for it," he said. "When I was first chosen by England it came as a surprise and I told myself: 'Make sure you enjoy it.' He certainly did that yesterday and without him England would have been in a sorry mess."

BULAWAYO SCOREBOARD

Zimbabwe won toss	
ZIMBABWE: First Innings	
G W Flower c Hussain b Silverwood	45
(151min, 100 balls, 5 fours)	
B V Carlisle c Crawley b Gough	0
(7min, 3 balls)	
*A D R Campbell c Silverwood b Croft	84
(151min, 138 balls, 13 fours)	
D L Houghton c Stewart b Croft	34
(99min, 60 balls, 1 six, 3 fours)	
TA Flower not out	58
(151min, 174 balls, 7 fours)	
A C Waller c Crawley b Croft	15
(53min, 47 balls, 1 four)	
G J Whittall c Atherton b Silverwood	7
(37min, 30 balls, 1 four)	
P A Strang not out	0
(17min, 14 balls)	
Extras (lb 2, w 2, nb 1)	15
Total (6 wickets, 384mins)	256
H H Stewart, B C Strang and H R Clough to bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-3 (G W Flower 2, 2-130 (Campbell 84, 3-126 (Houghton 34, 4-206 (A Flower 33), 5-236 (A Flower 47), 6-252 (A Flower 54)	

BOWLING: Mulally 14-4-43-0 (nb 1, w 1; 6 fours; 5-1-19-0, 3-1-11-0, 4-0-4-0, 2-1-4-0; Gough 21-4-70-1 (nb 5, w 1; 5 fours; 2-15-1, 4-0-16-0, 5-1-16-0, 4-0-15-0, 2-0-10-0; Silverwood 13-4-80-2 (nb 5, 7 fours; 4-0-25-1, 6-1-25-1, 3-3-0-1); Croft 29-14-45-3 (1 six, 5 fours; 5-1-15-0, 11-4-22-1, 12-6-7-2, 1-1-0-0; Tufnell 15-4-46-0 (nb 1, 4 fours; 3-0-4-0, 4-0-18-0, 5-2-15-0)

SCORING NOTES (first day): Lunch: 105-1 (20 overs, 123min: G W Flower 34, Campbell 70; Tea: 200-3 (30 overs, 245min: Houghton 33, A Flower 31). Second new ball: 242-5 (84 overs) at 4.25pm.

ENGLAND: N V Knight, *M A Atherton, JA J Stewart, G P Thorpe, N Hussain, JP Crawley, P D S Croft, D Strang, D Mulally, C E W Silverwood and P C R Tufnell.

Umpires: RS Durne (New Zealand) and I D Richardson (Third umpire: R S Durne).

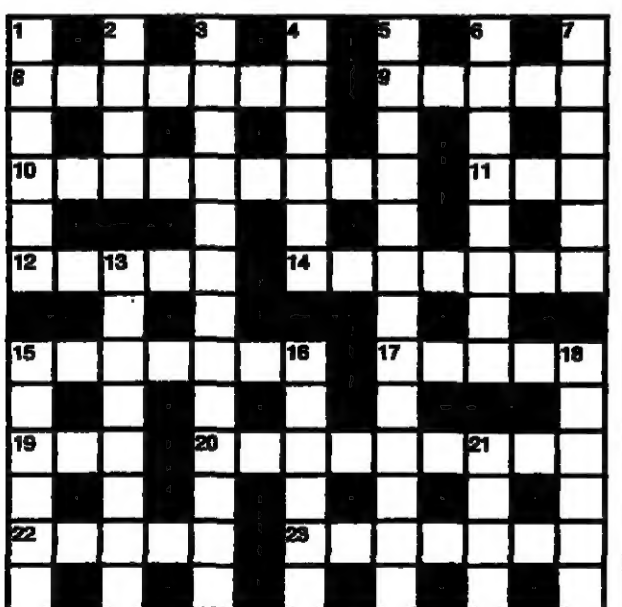
Match referee: Hanuman Singh (India).

TEST TO COME: Second (Namibia); December 26.

Compiled by Bill Frindall

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 969 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



- ACROSS
- 8 Carry out; kill (7)
 - 9 Baby barn or snowy bird (5)
 - 10 Soft-cover book (9)
 - 11 Unopened flower (3)
 - 12 Infantry weapon (5)
 - 14 Personal; a soldier (7)
 - 15 Release (slave) (7)
 - 17 Symbolic item; special-use coin (5)
 - 19 Auction item (3)
 - 20 Devoted to luxury (9)
 - 22 Small wood (5)
 - 23 Be given (7)
- DOWN
- 1 Plain ring; museum official (6)
 - 2 File (4)
 - 3 Officer i/c stores (13)
 - 4 Make off (6)
 - 5 Ball-striking vehicle (4-4-5)
 - 6 New Zealand rugby player (3-5)
 - 7 Heavy food (6)
 - 13 Work properly; formal social event (8)
 - 15 Of evil intent (6)
 - 16 Herald's jacket (6)
 - 18 Centres (of cells, atoms) (6)
 - 21 Identical counterpart (4)

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PRIZES: THE WINNER will receive a return ticket travelling Economy Class to anywhere on British Midland's domestic or international network.

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All flights are subject to availability.

Post your entry to Times Two Crossword, PO Box 6886, London E2 8SP to arrive by next Monday. The winners' names and solution will appear on Tuesday.

Name/Address

SOLUTION TO NO 968
ACROSS: 1 Hatchet job 8 Cabaret 9 Idiom 10 Suez
11 Pedantic 13 Craze 14 Cress 16 Monmouth 17 Zany
20 Large 21 Centrifuge 22 Retrospect
DOWN: 1 Hocus 2 Table manners 3 Hawk 4 Tether
5 Oligarchy 6 Tinseltown 7 Smacks 12 Veronese 13 Comely
15 Stager 18 Yacht 19 Onus

Newcastle
to unveil
plans for
stadium

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

NEWCASTLE United will today map out its financial future by outlining plans for a new stadium and a stock market flotation. Explaining the thinking behind a bigger stadium, Sir John Hall, the club's owner, said: "We're very conscious that the kids can't get in. The next generation can't get into the stadium. We've been too successful."

The combination of a bigger stadium and a share issue would offset some of Sir John's heavy investment in players and pave the way for further spending. St James' Park has a capacity of only 36,610 at a time when the club could attract 50,000-plus crowds.

Graham Courtney, the club's press officer, said: "We have got plans for a new stadium and tomorrow we'll say where we want it to go. Where it does go and what it is like is up to the council. If they don't approve the plans, we'll have to think again."

The club's preferred site is believed to be on Castle Leazes Moor, but it has also been suggested that it might move out of Newcastle to a site in Gateshead.

Hall had originally planned to float his ambitious scheme to create a sporting club, with basketball, ice hockey and rugby teams, along the same lines as Barcelona. However, it is now thought that only the football club will move for a full market listing, with estimates of a value for the club ranging between £140 million and £200 million.

Newcastle flotation, page 21

Owen's worries
spread to fleet

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

JUST a week after 3Com lost her forestry, another BT Global Challenge yacht has suffered a similar structural failure as the fleet continues through the Southern Ocean, towards Wellington, in tough conditions.

The failure on *Global Teamwork* of the 85ft, 14mm stainless steel wire stay that runs from the top of the mast to the bow, is a worry for race organisers and the technical director, Andrew Roberts, because it reinforces the possibility that the fault may be replicated, to some degree, on many of the 14 boats.

The crew on *Global Teamwork* was extremely disappointed to discover the fault after putting up a strong performance on this leg, having led for much of the way before holding third place. Early yesterday they were again making gains on their nearest rivals, the leader, *Group 4*, and the second-placed *Save The Children*, when the failure was discovered during a rig check.

The inspection revealed that five of the 19 strands of wire that comprise the stay had broken. "The breaks are at the top of the mast," Mervyn Owen, the skipper, said. "We took the mainsail down, slackened off the rig and sent a man up the mast to drop the forestay to the deck with the idea of cutting the wire and reterminating the stay. This was a plan we had had since first hearing of the problems on 3Com and finding two broken strands ourselves."

However, the rough conditions have prevented the crew from completing a repair because of the danger of

dropping any of the fittings over the side. *Global Teamwork* was thus plodding along under reduced sail and unable to carry any canvas on her forestay. "Unless we can find a period of relatively calm sea to undertake a jury rig, prospects for an early improvement in our performance are bleak," Owen said.

In the case of 3Com, the forestay sheared right through but the crew was able to save the mast by quickly replacing the broken stay with two halyards. Since then, David Tomkinson has managed to restate the wire in the way that Owen is now hoping to

BT Challenge chart — 31

Several other crews have also found breaks in the stays, including *Save The Children*, where there are worrying signs of deterioration in both the forestay and the backstay.

The latest ranking order, meanwhile, shows that *Group 4* and *Save The Children* are still fighting it out at the front, a good 60-70 miles ahead of four boats that are evenly matched in third position. They are *Toshiba Wave Warrior*, *Concert*, *Motorola* and, until yesterday at least, *Global Teamwork*.

In the Vendée Globe single-handed non-stop round-the-world race, Pete Goss, of Great Britain, on *Aqua Quorum*, is in ninth position, 2,632 miles behind the race leader, Christophe Auguin, of France, on *Ceodis*. The second Briton, Tony Bullimore, on *Edie Challenger*, was in eleventh, and last, position.

Mansell
refusing
to take a
back seat

NIGEL MANSELL yesterday denied that he has retired from Formula One for good after turning down the chance to drive for Jordan-Feugnot next season.

There appeared to be no way back for Britain's 1992 world champion after his decision to reject Eddie Jordan's approach, but yesterday he said: "I haven't retired. Other opportunities are possibly out there. I am a very patient person, a little bit older now and more mature, and I'm just going to wait and see what is round the corner."

Mansell was just 0.3sec off the pace set by Ralf Schumacher in testing last week, despite being out of a grand prix car for 19 months after his embarrassing comeback with McLaren.

Despite being excited by the prospect of competing at the top again, and the lure of a probable £5 million fee, Mansell turned down the chance of returning as the sport's oldest driver.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my test in Barcelona and the professionalism and atmosphere of the Benson and Hedges Jordan team was as good as any I have ever worked with," Mansell said.

"However, after consultations with my family and business advisers, I quickly came to realise that my schedule would not permit me to give sufficient time to the Jordan team and their sponsors."

Mansell will now concentrate on his golf complex in Devon, where he has reduced his handicap from five to one in the last year.

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Bhutto's husband
charged with
brother's murder